NINJA
HIGH SCHOOL
NHS
4
BEN DUNN

VOLUME 4

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MAIN CHARACTERS

PRINCESS ASRIAL
Asrial is the eldest princess of Salusia, a planet of skunk-like humanoids. Usually sweet, gentle and kind, she also has a fierce temper and a strong sense of pride in her heritage. When angered, she demonstrates immense strength and a talent for producing power armor and weapons out of thin air. A natural mechanic/engineer, she is able to apply Salusia's advanced technology even to Earth machines.

ICHI-KUN "ITCHY KOO" ICHINOHEI
Ichi is the first-born daughter of the Ichinohei ninja clan and is heir to its leadership. Initially, Ichi is quite vain, selfish and conniving, but she quickly learns that there are better ways to treat people than that. Aside from her prodigious skills as a ninja, she also has a remarkable ability to pull giant mallets out of nowhere.

JEREMY FEEPLE
Jeremy is your average high-school student living in your not-so-average town. He's reasonably athletic, but no jock; reasonably intelligent, but no nerd. His father disappeared some years ago, and Jeremy's had to be the man of the house ever since. Despite his mother and little brother both being ninjas, Jeremy's never taken to that calling.

SAKURA INN

NINJA HIGH SCHOOL

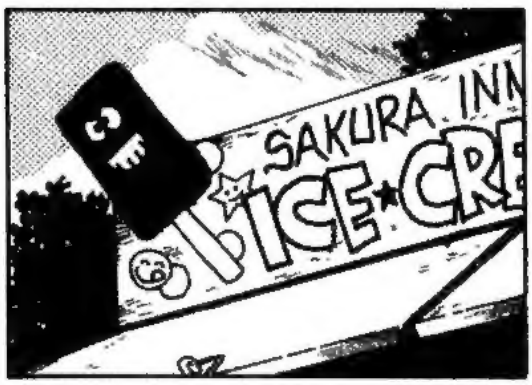
BEN DUNN
CREATOR

CLEM ROBINS
LETTERER

CHRIS ULM
EDITOR

AN ICY STARE CREATES COMPETITION

FLUGERVILLE, U.S.A.
WELCOME Y'ALL TO THE FLUGERVILLE COUNTY FAIR


SAKURA INN
ICE★CRE

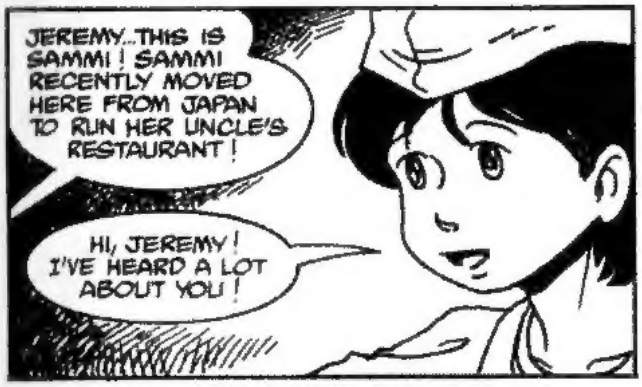
THE WIND-UP...

PITCH!
THE PITCH!

!
GLOMP!

OOMPH...
BRAVO! GOOD THROW, SAMMI!
THANKS, ICHI! I'VE BEEN PRACTICING THAT THROW ALL WINTER!
SAY... WHO IS HE, ANYWAYS?
PRIZE PRI
SAKURA INN
SODA
NOV

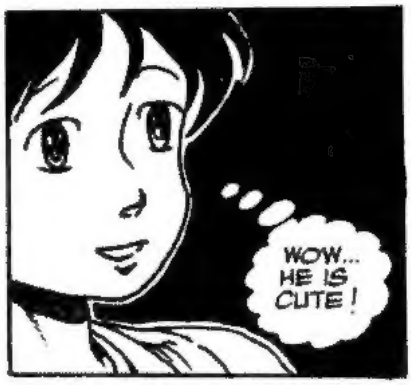
OH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU TWO HAVE NOT BEEN FORMALLY INTRODUCED!


JEREMY...THIS IS SAMMI! SAMMI RECENTLY MOVED HERE FROM JAPAN TO RUN HER UNCLE'S RESTAURANT!
HI, JEREMY! I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU!

SAMMI'S A...GIRL?

IT'S REALLY NICE TO MEET YOU! PUT IT THERE!
ER...
GO ON, JEREMY...

YUP! HOWDY, HOWDY...
SHAKE! SHAKE!


WOW... HE IS CUTE!

OWW...

IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU HIT IT OFF SO WELL!
AND YOU SAY YOU LIVE WITH HIM?
3 SHOTS FOR 25¢
A TRY

YOU LUCKY GAL!
I THINK SO!

HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA! CRUSHING MY HAND AND ALL!
OH?

I DIDN'T INTEND TO! I DIDN'T SQUEEZE THAT HARD!
WELL, IT HURTS!

OH, STOP BEING A BABY... LET ME SEE YOUR HAND.
OH, IT'S ONLY A LITTLE BENT!

OW!
BE QUIET! I'M ONLY TRYING TO HELP!
KRAK

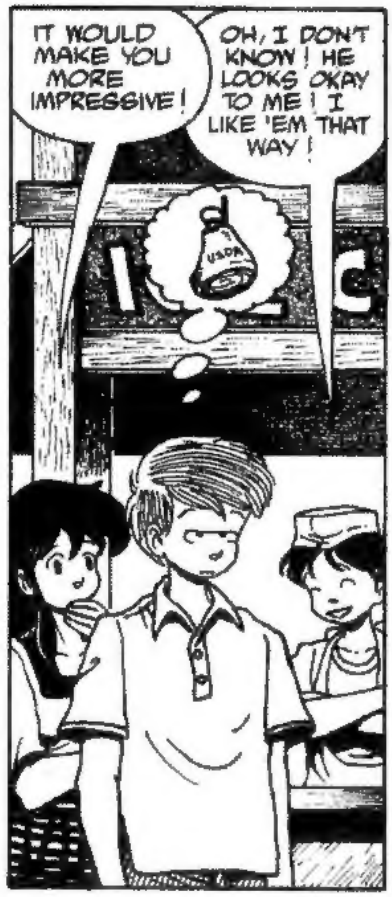
FEH! THIS TOWN REMINDS ME TOO MUCH OF QUAGMIRE!
TIGER-
HMMM... FLUGERVILLE WASN'T THAT FAR FROM QUAGMIRE! I DON'T SEE WHY SAMMI NEEDS TO WORK FOR HER UNCLE HERE! IF SHE WAS WITH ME, SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE TO WORK AGAIN! AFTER ALL, WHAT WOMAN CAN RESIST A MAN WITH MONEY?!
BLAST THOSE GAMMILONS!
YAMATO
SHOOTING GALLERY
AND LENDO RIVALSON HAS LOTS OF THAT!

EH! WHAT'S THIS!
ICE CREE
SODA 75¢

SO! ONLY A FEW DAYS BACK FROM JAPAN AND YOU'RE HITTING UP ON MY GIRL!
THREATEN!
WHAT?!

HOLD IT LENDO! I WAS ONLY FIXING HIS HAND!
YEAH!
WELL, AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT MOLESTING SAMMI!
LET THAT BE A WARNING!

MAYBE IF YOU LIFTED WEIGHTS YOU'D BE STRONGER!
YOU WANT ME TO BE A JOCK?


IT WOULD MAKE YOU MORE IMPRESSIVE!
OH, I DON'T KNOW! HE LOOKS OKAY TO ME! I LIKE 'EM THAT WAY!

TELL ME SAMMI... WHY ARE YOU WORKING HERE LIKE A COMMONER?
HUMPH! WELL, FIRST OF ALL I'M HELPING MY UNCLE AND SECOND OF ALL, I ENJOY IT!

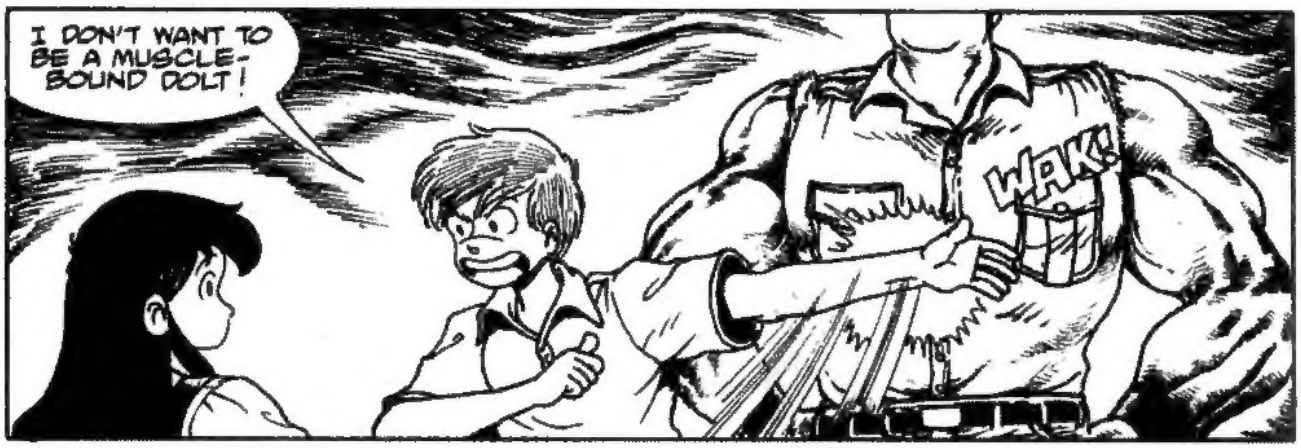
IF YOU WERE TO MARRY ME, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORK AT ALL!

BUT I LIKE TO WORK!

WHAT? A WOMAN ACTUALLY REFUSING A PROPOSAL FROM ME? RIVALSON LENDO!
I CANNOT BELIEVE IT!

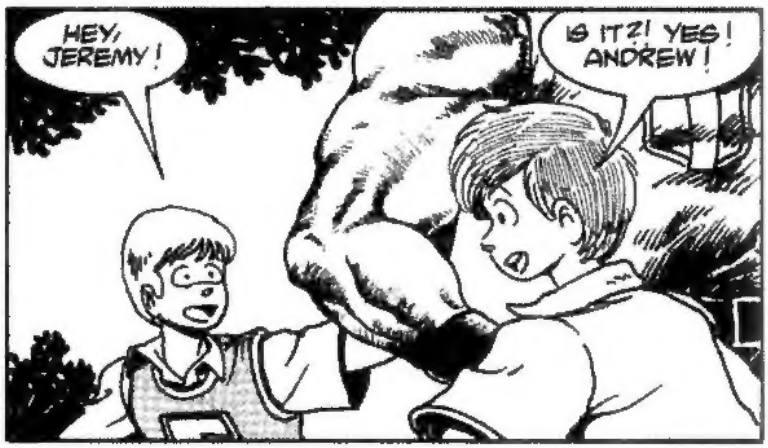
SUCH ARROGANCE! SUCH TENACITY!
I LIKE THAT!

AH, LEAVE ME ALONE, ICHI-KUN!
OH, STOP IT, JEREMY! ACT LIKE A MAN!


I DON'T WANT TO BE A MUSCLE-BOUND DOLT!
WAK!

OOP.

HEH! I DIDN'T MEAN YOU BIG FELLA!


HEY, JEREMY!
IS IT?! YES! ANDREW!

I SEE THAT YOU MET OX! DON'T WORRY, HE'S NOT DANGEROUS!
SO WHAT BRINGS YOU TO FLUGERVILLE?
I JUST THOUGHT I'D BRING ITCHY KOO TO ONE OF YOUR FAMOUS CARNIVALS!
HELLO!

WOW! WHERE'D YOU GET HER? SHE'S A DOLL!
WELL.. SHE'S STAYING WITH MY FAMILY!

OH? HEH SORRY!
DON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN!

DO YOU KNOW HIM, JEREMY?
YES! WE BOTH PLAY AGAINST EACH OTHER WHEN OUR SCHOOLS HAVE SOCCER MATCHES!

HEY, ANDREW!
YO!
HOW'S IT GOING, RONALD! LUGHEAD!

ANDREW! WHO IS THIS VISION OF LOVELINESS?
MY, YOU ARE A GENTLE-MAN!
HER NAME IS ITCHY KOO!

ICHI KUN--WHAT A WONDERFUL NAME! IT MEANS FIRST BORN, DOESN'T IT?
OH!
YOU KNOW JAPANESE!

KLUN..
NNG!!

AH, HA!
CAUGHT YOU WITH MY COMPETITION! YOU LOWLIFE!

CALM DOWN, VERNIA! IT'S JUST AN INNOCENT FLING
HMMMM..
PAT PAT

DON'T BE SO PATRONIZING!
GLOOM!

TAKE IT EASY, VERNIA!
AND YOU TOO, ANDREW? FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY!

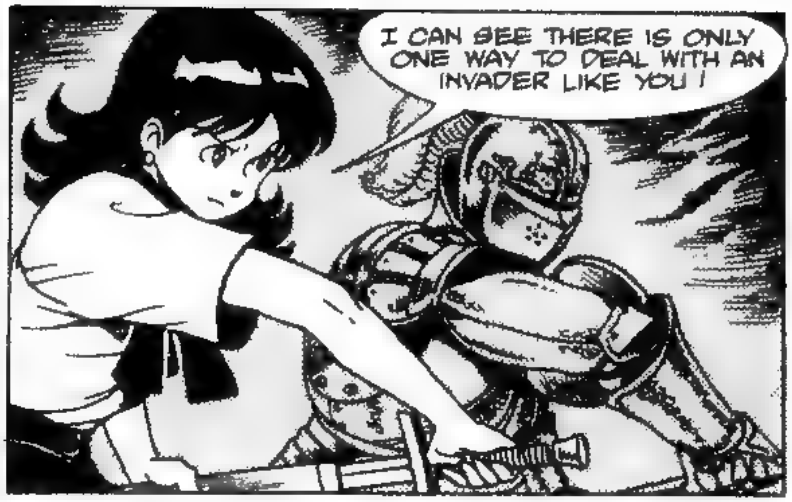
AND YOU! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, SETTING UP AN ICE CREAM STAND AT THIS FAIR?
WELL, IT IS A FREE COUNTRY, ISN'T IT?

I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT MY FAMILY HAS BEEN THE EXCLUSIVE VENDOR TO THE FLUGERVILLE COUNTY FAIR FOR OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS!
COMPLAIN COMPLAIN

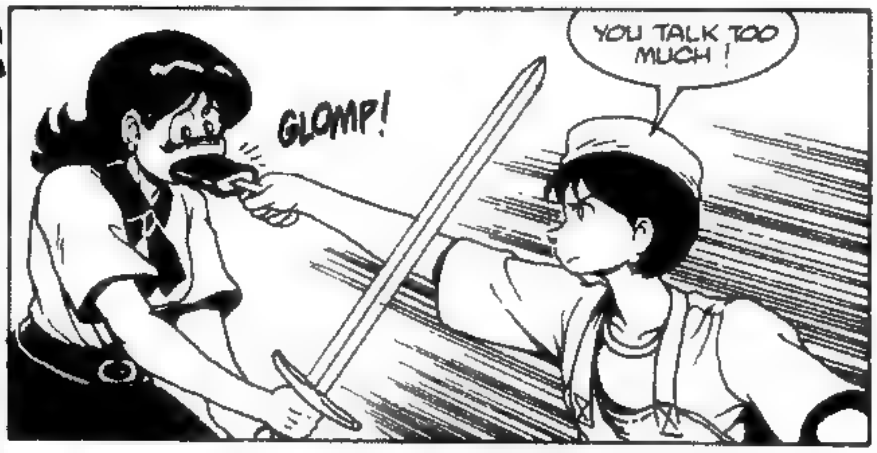
SO?

INCREDIBLE! I NEVER KNEW A GIRL WITH SUCH SPIRIT! SAMMI WOULD BE PERFECT FOR ME!

DO YOU SEE CONCERN IN THESE EYES!?
INSOLENCE!


I CAN SEE THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH AN INVADER LIKE YOU!

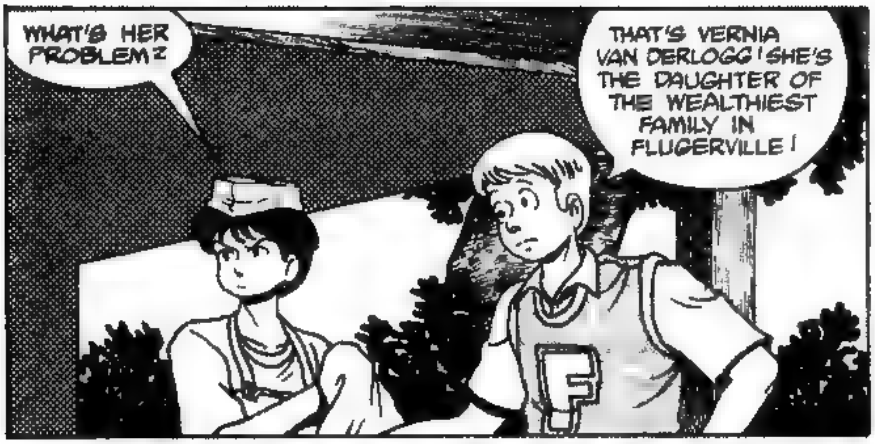
ATTACK!!
AHH!


GLOMP!
YOU TALK TOO MUCH!

AS LONG AS I PAID FOR THIS SPACE, I'M GOING TO SELL MY ICE CREAM!
AND THERE ISN'T ANYTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT!
Chomp! Chomp!

OH, REALLY? WE WILL SEE ABOUT THAT!
NO ONE MAKES A FOOL OF VERNIA VAN DERLOGG!

OH, OH.. I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT!

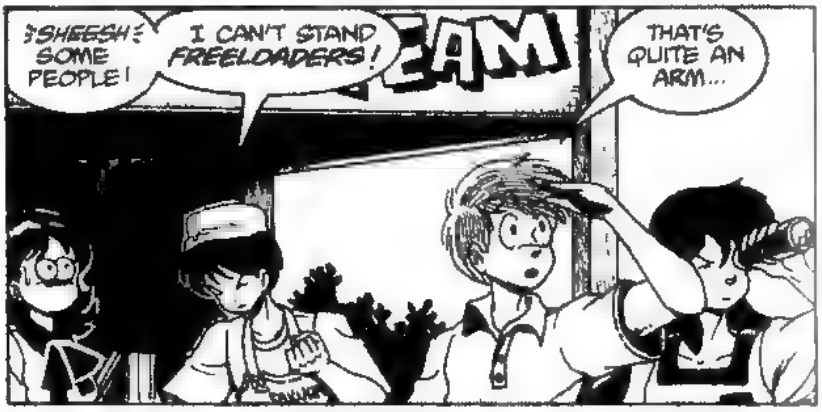

WHAT'S HER PROBLEM?
THAT'S VERNIA VAN DERLOGG! SHE'S THE DAUGHTER OF THE WEALTHIEST FAMILY IN FLUGERVILLE!

OH, REALLY?
THIS OUGHT TO BE VERY INTERESTING!

I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING.
HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?!

CHILL OUT, DUDE! I JUST WANNA, LIKE, CHECK OUT THE GOODS, MAN!

DEADBEAT! YOU ASK PERMISSION FIRST!
LEFT UPPERCUT!
POW


SHEESH! SOME PEOPLE!
I CAN'T STAND FREELOADERS!
THAT'S QUITE AN ARM...

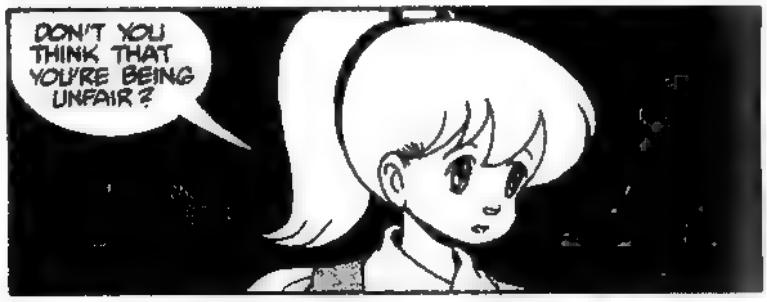
ANYWAY'S ...HOW'S YOUR MOM, JEREMY?
OH, FINE ..AND YOURS?
FINE. FINE.

SHE STILL THINKS ABOUT YOUR DAD, THOUGH ..ANY WORD?
NONE. I WONDER WHERE HE IS.

ANDREW ABOUT FAMILY, JEREMY?
OH, SURE...
IN FACT, IF DAD HADN'T GONE TO JAPAN.
...HE MIGHT HAVE MARRIED ANDREW'S MOM!
YEAH! WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN BROTHERS!
BROTHERS? OH MY.. I JUST CAN'T IMAGINE IT!
SOON.
VERY SOON, JEREMY.
ATTENTION, ALL FAIR GOERS!! COME ONE! COME ALL! GET THE BEST ICE CREAM HERE!!
PREMIUM, MADE IN FLUG
V.D.L ICE CRE

HEH, HEH... THAT WILL SHOW THEM THAT I AM NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH!
CHOCOLATE
CHOCOLATE
VANILLA

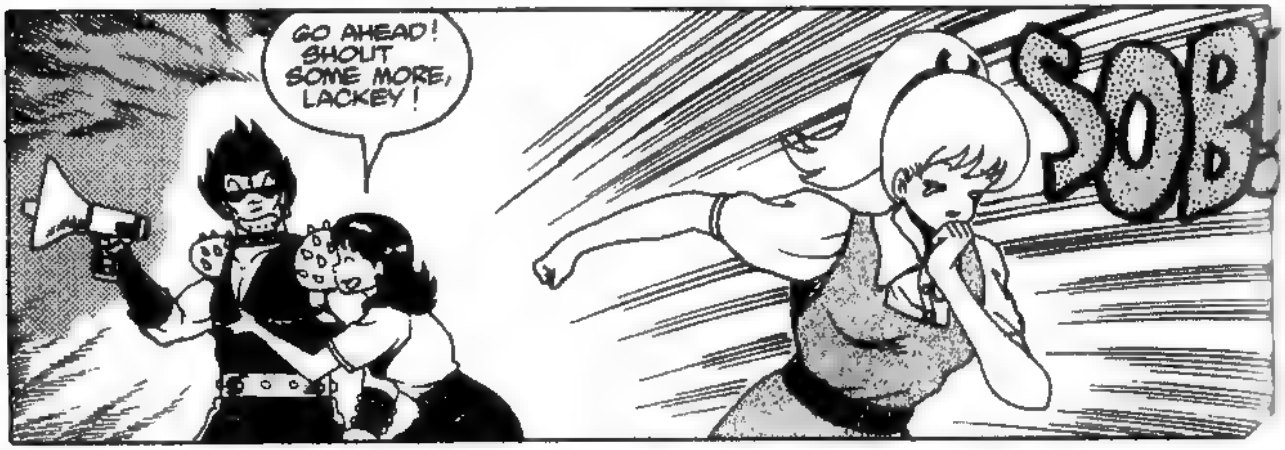
THEY CAN'T COME HERE AND COMPETE AGAINST ME! MY FAMILY'S HAD A MONOPOLY HERE FOR OVER A HUNDRED YEARS, AND NO DARN QUAGMIRE STOOGE IS GOING TO MUSCLE INTO MY TERRITORY!
VERNIA?


DON'T YOU THINK THAT YOU'RE BEING UNFAIR?

WHAT? HOW DARE YOU ACCUSE ME!!

WHAT KIND OF TALK IS THAT? ARE YOU GOING TO BETRAY OUR TOWN BY BUYING FROM THEM? IF SO, THEN GO ON, YOU BENEDICT ARNOLD!
GUILT!

SNIF!


GO AHEAD! SHOUT SOME MORE, LACKEY!
SOB!

BETSY! WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
OH, ANDREW!

IT'S VERNIA! SHE'S BECOME SO RUTHLESS! IT'S AS IF SHE'S OBSESSED WITH DESTROYING YOUR FRIEND'S BUSINESS!
SHE EVEN INSULTED ME!

OF ALL THE NERVE!
SHE'S REALLY GONE TOO FAR!

BEST IN FAIR
BOY, VERNIA SURE DOES PLAY DIRTY!
SAKURA INN
ICE CREAM

YOU THINK SO?
BEING RUTHLESS KEEPS PEOPLE ON THEIR TOES!
YES. VERY ADMIRABLE!
RNC

BUT SINCE I LIVE IN QUAGMIRE, I CANNOT LET HER DEFEAT US!
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO?

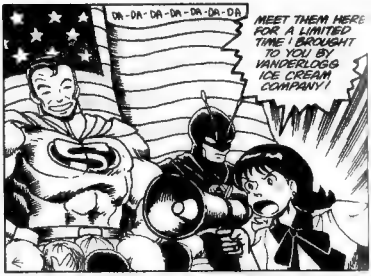
DO NOT FEAR! RIVALSAN LENDO HAS A PLAN..

ICHI! I'LL NEED YOUR HELP!
ME?

WELL, IF YOU COULD... BUZZ! FUZZ!
WELL, I GUESS IT'S A GOOD CAUSE..
WHERE IS EVERYBODY GOING?
I DUNNO.. SOME SORT OF COMMOTION GOING ON OVER AT THE QUAGMIRE BOOTH!
VAN DER LOGG ICE
WELL, GO FIND OUT!
RIGHT!
HELLO, GOOD GENTLEPEOPLE'S OF FLUGERVILLE! I BRING TO YOU AN AMAZING DEMONSTRATION OF NINJA SKILL BROUGHT TO YOU COURTESY OF THE R.N.C. AND THE SAKURA INN ICE CREAM BOOTH!
R.N.C.

BOO! FAKE! FAKE!
THROW! THROW! THROW! TOSS! THROW! TOSS!
WELL? WHAT HAPPENED?
SO! THEY WANT TO PLAY ROUGH!
VRRUM!
KUP!
HEY, LOOK! IT'S THE BUGMAN! INSECTOID DARK DEFENDER OF JUSTICE! TM

PARTNER-IN-LAW SUPERB MAN™


DA-DA-DA-DA-DA-DA-DA
MEET THEM HERE FOR A LIMITED TIME! BROUGHT TO YOU BY VANDERLOGG ICE CREAM COMPANY!

BAA-DOOM!

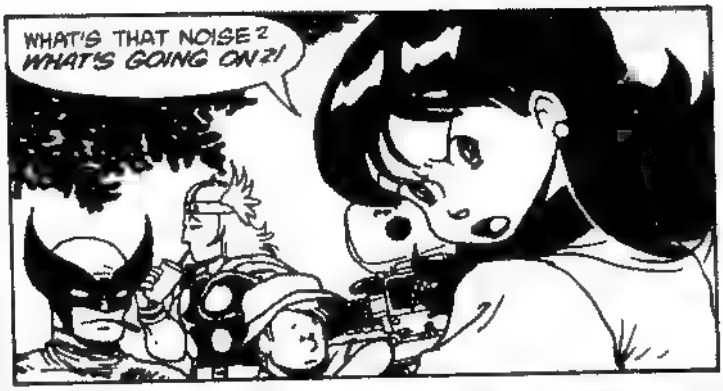
NEVER MIND THEM...ONLY HERE CAN YOU WITNESS THE MIND-NUMBING PERFORMANCE OF OUR OWN...

SUPER SCIENCE NINJA TEAM
TREAT MAN!

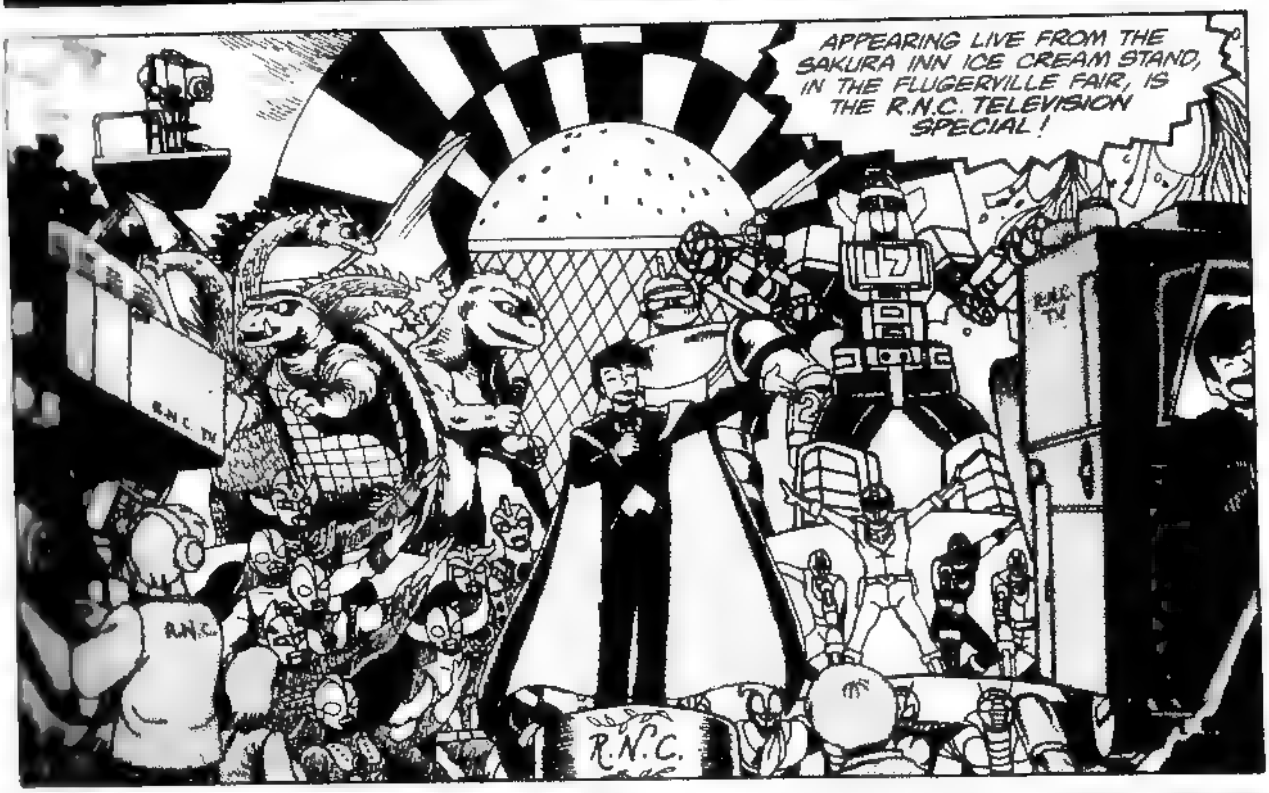
WATCH AS THEY ARE ATTACKED BY HORDES OF... MOH-NSTERS!!
TREATMAN, BAZOOKA FIRE!!
ZZAM!!
GROWL!
HYA!
FIGHT!
ARR!
TRYING TO SHOW ME UP, EH?! WELL, TWO CAN PLAY THAT GAME!
HURRY! HURRY! BUY AN ICE CREAM AND BE A PART OF VAN DERLOGG'S NEWEST MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR FILM EPIC "GONE WITH THE CREAM!"
RNC

ALL IT TAKES IS A GENUINE VAN DERLOGG POPSICLE STICK TO JOIN THE LARGEST SUPERHERO CAST EVER TO BE FILMED!
BOY, SHE'S GOING ALL OUT! THAT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH TO BEAT!
NOT REALLY.
OH, WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?
YOU'LL SEE!
HELLO? GET ME R.N.C. HEADQUARTERS!
R.N.C
OKAY, KID. THIS IS THE SCENE WHERE THE BULK™ LIFTS YOU OVER HIS HEAD AND IMBEDS YOU INTO THE GROUND. THINK YOU CAN HANDLE THAT? OKAY..GOOD.

ALL RIGHT, GET READY TO ROLL 'EM! QUIET ON THE SET!
BAM! BAM!


WHAT'S THAT NOISE? WHAT'S GOING ON?!

. . . . . .


APPEARING LIVE FROM THE SAKURA INN ICE CREAM STAND, IN THE FLUGERVILLE FAIR, IS THE R.N.C. TELEVISION SPECIAL!
R.N.C. TV
R.N.C.
R.N.C.

HOW DARE THEY! THIS TIME IT'S GONE TOO FAR!

ATTENTION ALL EMPLOYEES! ARE WE GOING TO STAND AROUND WHILE THEY STEAL OUR BUSINESS?!
NO!

THEN LET'S GO GET THEM!
CHARGE!!!
AH, HA! THEY SEEK TO SETTLE THIS WITH FORCE! R.N.C. PERSONNEL... ATTACK!

SWIT!
WHAK!
OW!
MADE IN U.S.A.
PUSH! SHOVE!
UGH! GRUNT!
ZIP!
TWIP!
KEEP IT UP, MEN! REPEL THE INVADERS!
AKKK HT!
Dear Reader;
This note is placed here as a reminder that you did not accidently pick up a standard "super-hero" comic by mistake.
Thank you
THE EDITORS
BE STOUT, MY BRAVE FELLOWS! HOLD YOUR GROUND!
HIT!
POKE!

I AM THE BULK!™

YOU ARE NOTHING TO CHEF OF THE NORTH STAR!

FLUGERVILLE BELONGS ONLY TO FLUGERVILLIANS!

IT IS THE RIGHT OF EVERYONE TO DECIDE WHAT ICE CREAM THEY SHOULD EAT!

AAAAAAAA!
SSSSS!

DISH
DISH
DISH
DISH
DISH
TAAA-TAA TAA TAA TAA TAAA TA
?
YOU ARE ALREADY FAT!
AA! YOUR HUNDRED FIST MULTI-FEED MANEUVER WAS BUT A SNACK!
URRKK
BLOAT!
HEH-
STOP!

LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE DOING! WHY DO YOU DO THIS? I KNOW IT'S DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE THAT COMPETE AGAINST EACH OTHER TO GET ALONG, BUT WE BOTH SHARE THE SAME PLACE! WE SHOULD TRY TO LIVE TOGETHER AND NOT DESTROY EACH OTHER JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE BUYS ONE ICE CREAM OVER ANOTHER!

GOSH...

SHE'S RIGHT...

LET'S JUST ENJOY THE FAIR..

I MUST ADMIT THAT BETSY IS A SURPRISING GIRL!

YES... ISN'T SHE..

GREAT GOING, BETSY!

THANK YOU, ANDREW!

SO HOW ABOUT YOU TWO? CAN YOU MAKE UP?

NO!

NEVER!

OH, I SEE...

THEN GO BACK TO WHATEVER YOU WERE DOING!

BA-DUING

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN THE LAST OF ME, RIVALSAN LENDO!

YOU'LL FIND THE R.N.C. PREPARED FOR ANYTHING!

FINALLY, A MATCH FOR ONE SUCH AS I!

WHAT A WENCH!

VERY WELL! A TRUCE FOR NOW!

UUUUH... MISS VAN DERLOGG!

WHAT IS IT, LACKEY?

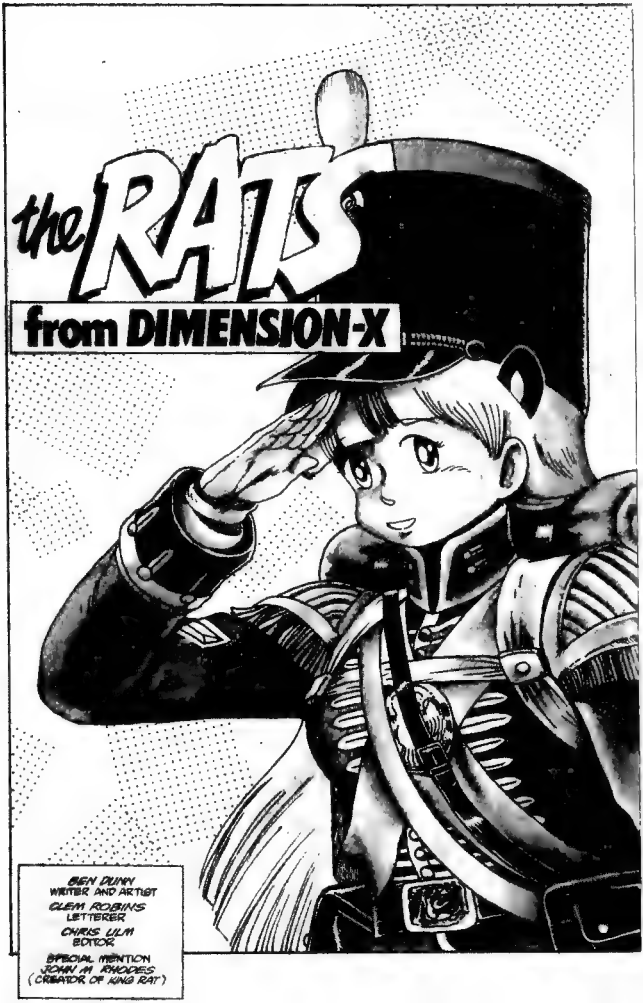
ALL THE ICE CREAM IS GONE!

LUGHEAD! HOW COULD YOU?

EASY!

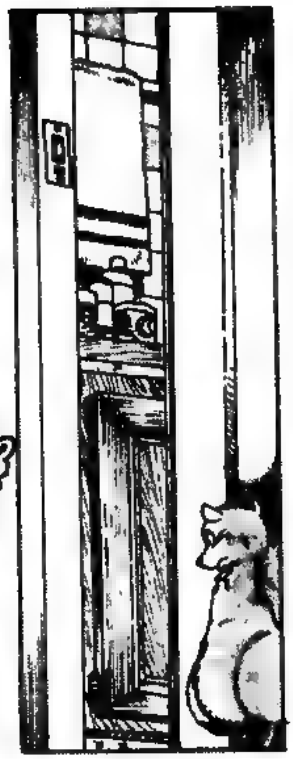
HE ATE ALL OURS TOO!

SORRY, I'M LATE... DID I MISS ANYTHING?

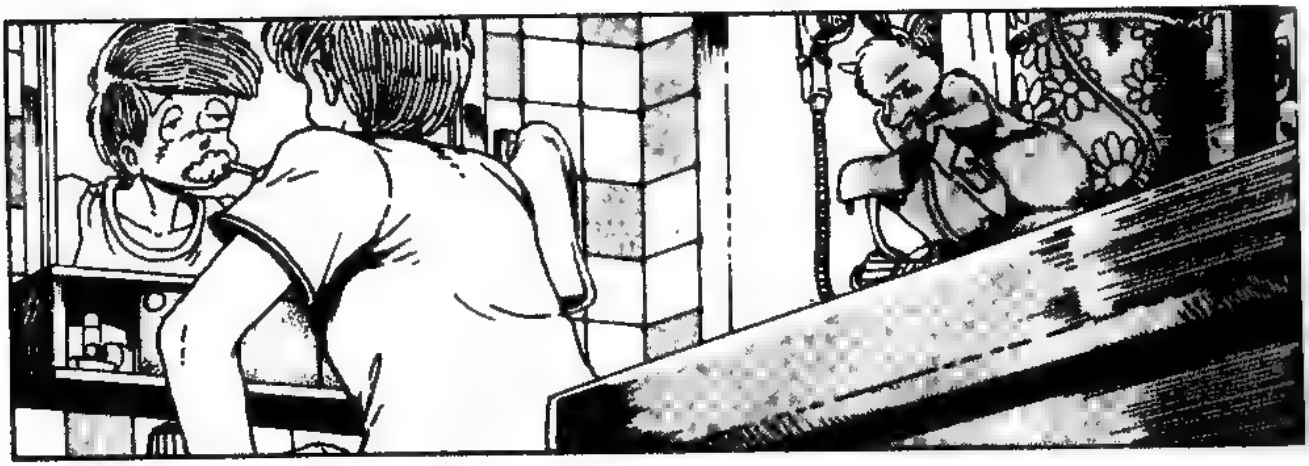

the RATS
from DIMENSION-X
BEN DUNN
WRITER AND ARTIST
GLEN ROBINS
LETTERER
CHRIS ULM
EDITOR
SPECIAL MENTION
JOHN M. BRODERS
(CREATOR OF KING RAT)

R.E.
'S SHE JEREMY WAS SO CUTE AS A KID. I ALMOST WISH I HAD A LITTLE BROTHER!
PHOTO ALBUM
SOMETIMES I THINK JEREMY IS MY BROTHER!
WHAT A SILLY THOUGHT...
WHAT ARE YOU READING, TCHY KOO?
WHA'?!
OH, PICTURES!
HEY, I WAS LOOKING AT THAT!
JEREMY IS MY BOYFRIEND!
ARE WE GOING THROUGH THAT AGAIN?

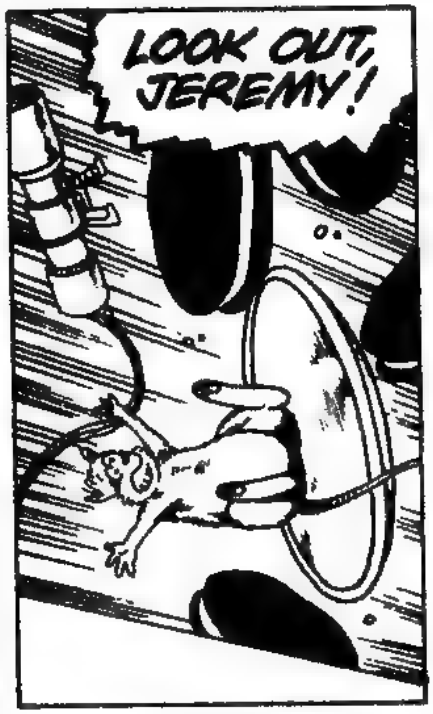
GASP
GASP



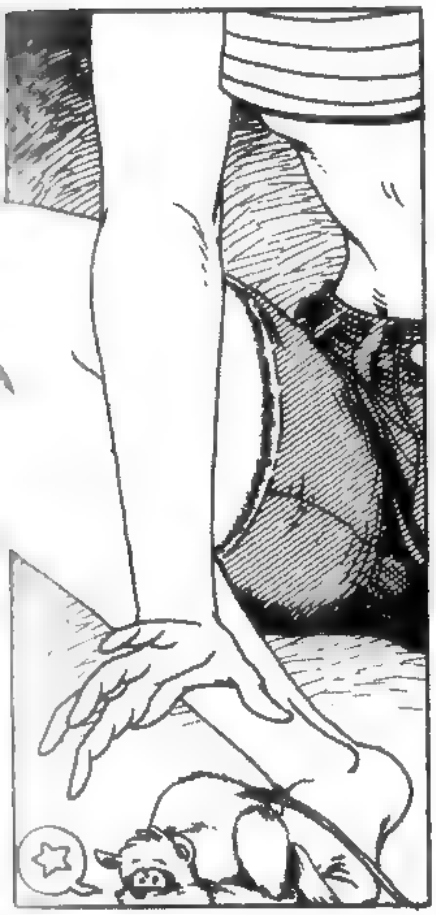
BRUSH
BRUSH



NOW JUST HOLD IT STEADY!


LOOK OUT, JEREMY!

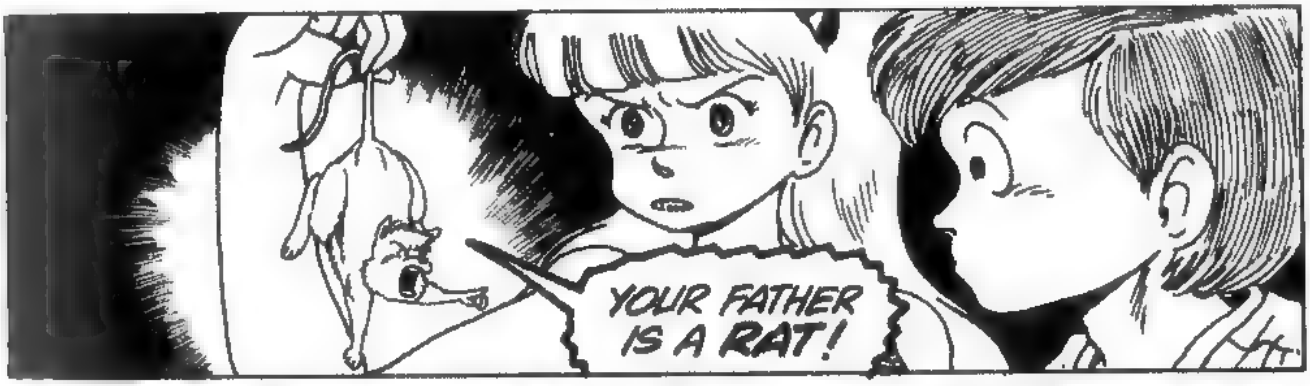
THERE'S A RAT WITH A GUN AIMED AT YOU!
MUMPHZ



WHAT'S A RAT DOING HERE?

JEREMY PEEPLE! I BRING YOU VERY IMPORTANT NEWS!

WHAT IS IT?


YOUR FATHER IS A RAT!

HOW DARE YOU INSULT HIS FAMILY!
1069

heh! heh!

I MEANT TO SAY.. YOUR FATHER LIVES WITH US RATS!
WHAT?

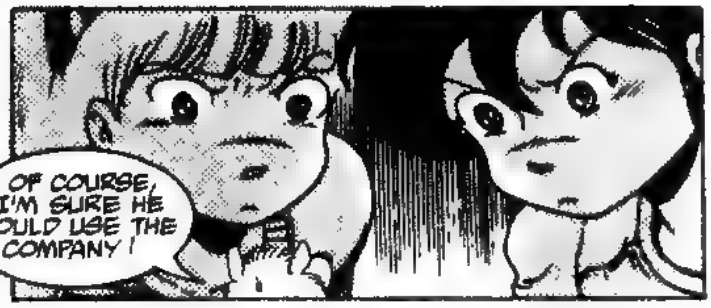
IT'S TRUE! YOUR FATHER, BOB FEEPLE, IS LIVING WITH US IN OUR OWN DIMENSION! HE IS VERY WELL, AND WANTS YOU TO VISIT HIM! I AM INSTRUCTED TO BRING YOU BACK WITH ME!

DAD?... HE'S STILL...
JEREMY! I'D BE CAUTIOUS!

IT COULD BE A TRICK! I'M SURE YOUR DAD HAS MADE MANY RAT ENEMIES OVER THE YEARS!
YOU COULD BE RIGHT... HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH?
WELL... UH...

I HAVE AN IDEA! WE'LL ACCOMPANY JEREMY!

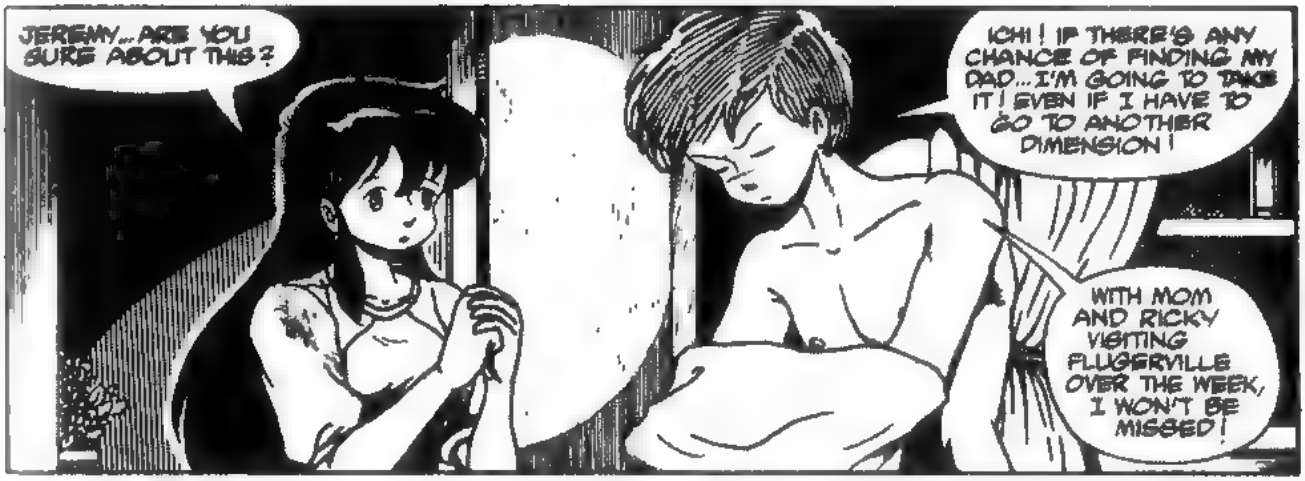
NO! NO! OUT OF THE QUESTION! MY INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO ONLY BRING JEREMY!
YOU TWO WOULD JUST GET IN THE WAY!


OF COURSE, I'M SURE HE COULD USE THE COMPANY!

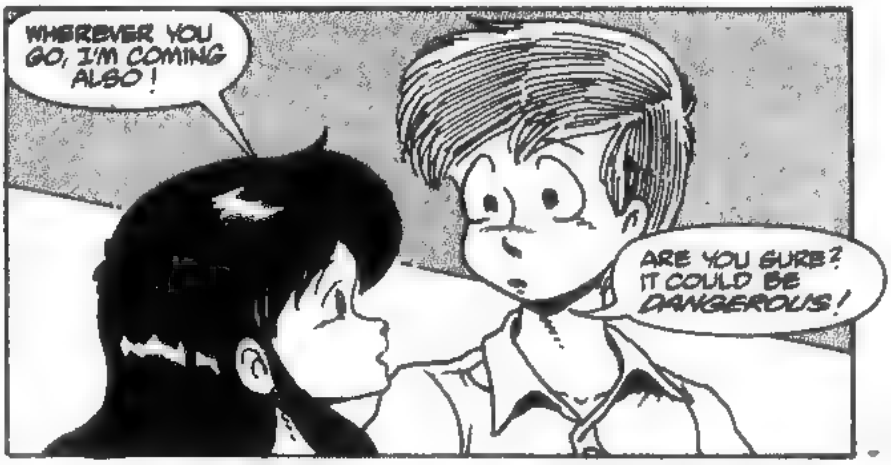
WOW... I'LL FINALLY GET TO SEE DAD AGAIN!

C'MON! WE HAVE TO GET READY!

WHAT I WON'T DO FOR MY COUNTRY!
HMMM... COOKIES...


JEREMY... ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
ICHI! IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE OF FINDING MY DAD... I'M GOING TO TAKE IT! EVEN IF I HAVE TO GO TO ANOTHER DIMENSION!
WITH MOM AND RICKY VISITING FLUGERVILLE OVER THE WEEK, I WON'T BE MISSED!

BUT CAN YOU REALLY TRUST THAT RAT?
I HAVE MY DOUBTS, TOO! AFTER ALL, MY FATHER WAS ONE OF THE BEST RAT EXTERMINATORS IN QUAGMIRE! BUT I'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT!


WHEREVER YOU GO, I'M COMING ALSO!
ARE YOU SURE? IT COULD BE DANGEROUS!

I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF!
BESIDES, I WANT TO MEET YOUR FATHER!

ARE YOU TWO READY, YET?
ALMOST! TELL ME, MR. RAT... HOW LONG WILL WE BE GONE?

I ASSURE YOU, YOU WILL BE RETURNED BEFORE YOUR MOTHER ARRIVES!
AND IS MY DAD ALSO GOING TO RETURN WITH US?

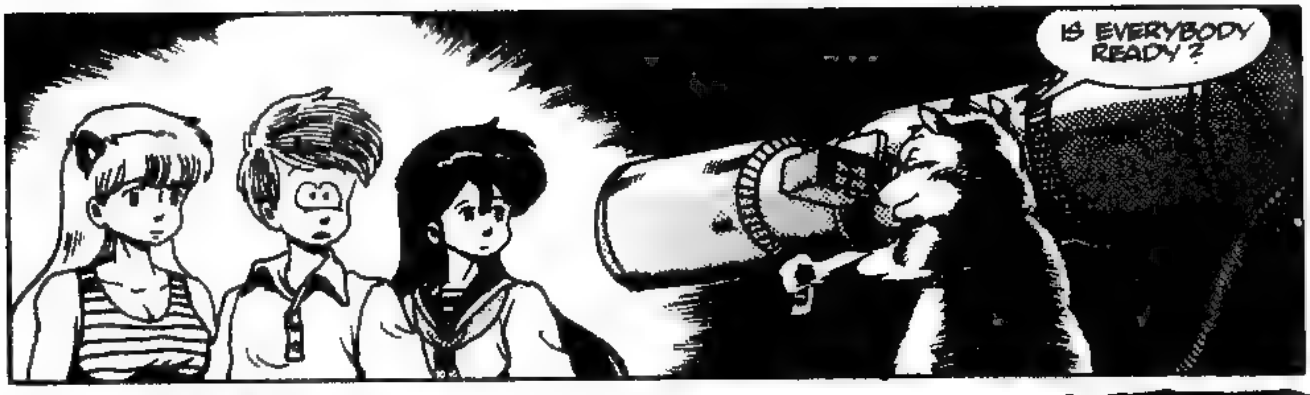
THAT IS A QUESTION ONLY HE CAN ANSWER!

DARN IT! I HATE IT WHEN THAT HAPPENS!
I LOVE DOING THAT!

OKAY, EVERYONE! I NEED TO MAKE A FEW MINOR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE DIMENSIONAL BEAM GUN..
...AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY!

ARE YOU SURE THAT'S SAFE?
THIS THING?

OH, ABSOLUTELY! I'VE DONE THIS MANY TIMES!


IS EVERYBODY READY?

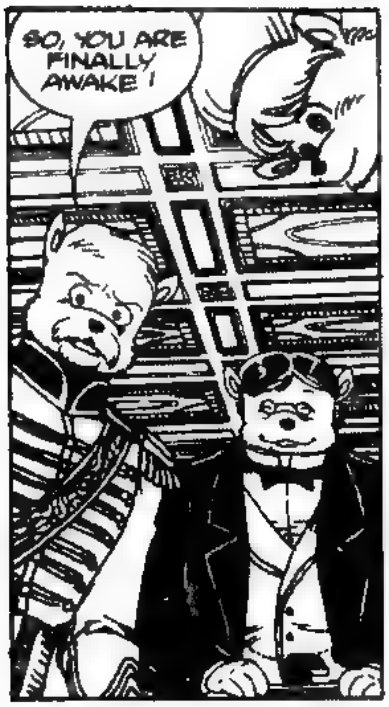
NOW!
KLIK! KLIK!
KLIK KLIK

OOP... FORGOT TO PLUG IT IN!

RIGHT! GET READY!! LET'S GO!
ZRAM!!

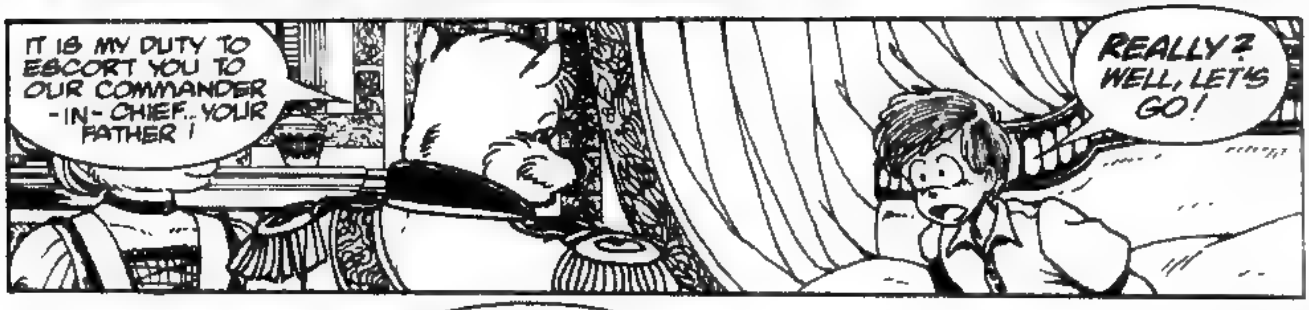
OHH!
SHURP!
WE'RE GOING INTO THAT RATHOLE
ZOP!
INTERESTING
AAHHHHHHHHH!!!

UHHHHH..


SO, YOU ARE FINALLY AWAKE!

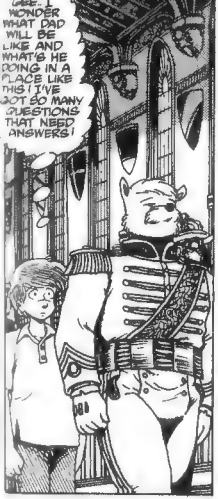
WHERE AM I?!

WHO ARE YOU?
I AM CAPTAIN PASHA! WELCOME TO DIMENSION-X!


IT IS MY DUTY TO ESCORT YOU TO OUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.. YOUR FATHER!
REALLY? WELL, LET'S GO!

YOWCH! MY SHOULDER'S STIFF!

I APOLOGIZE! IT IS THE AFTEREFFECTS OF THE RATHOLE TRANSFER UNIT!


I WONDER WHAT DAD WILL BE LIKE AND WHAT'S HE DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS! I'VE GOT SO MANY QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS!

WHY DID HE LEAVE US? HE BETTER HAVE A GOOD ONE FOR THAT!

IN FACT, HE BETTER HAVE A REALLY GOOD ONE FOR THAT!

THAT WAY... THROUGH THAT DOOR!
WELL, THIS IS IT...

DAD?

WELCOME, SON!

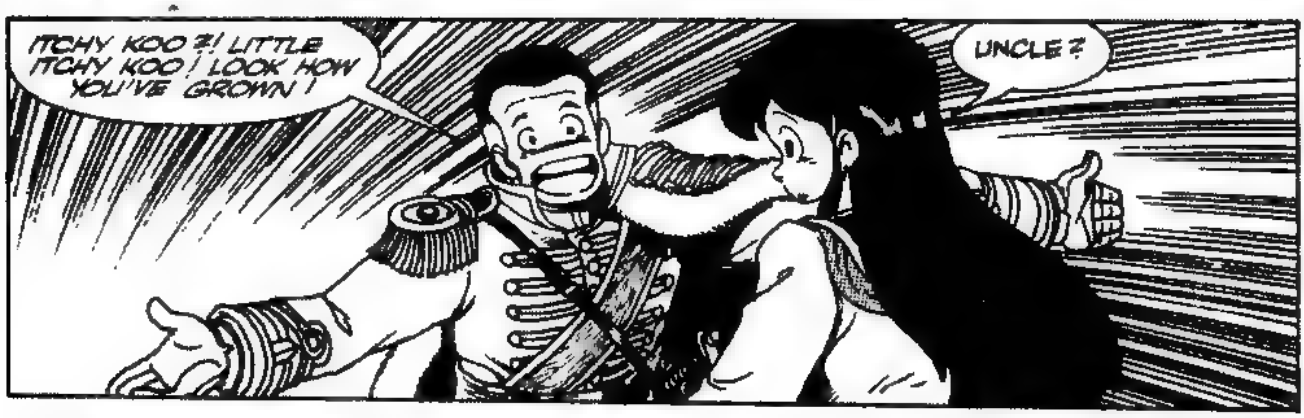
GOOD TO SEE YOU, JEREMY! I TRUST THE TRIP WAS NOT TOO UNPLEASANT!
DAD! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S YOU! IT REALLY IS YOU!

IN LIVING COLOR!

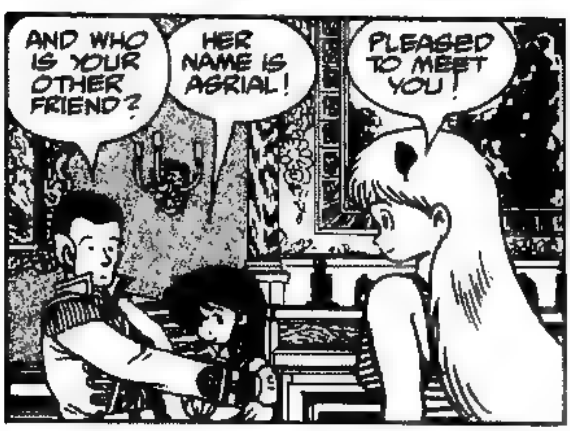
SO HOW IS YOUR MOTHER?
OH, FINE... SHE'S WITH RICKY IN FLUGERVILLE!

HMMMM...
FLUGERVILLE, EH? NEVER DID LIKE THAT TOWN!
TOO NOISY!
DAD... I WANT TO ASK YOU SOMETHING!

YES, SON...
EXCUSE ME, SIR! THE OTHERS HAVE ARRIVED!


ITCHY KOO?! LITTLE ITCHY KOO! LOOK HOW YOU'VE GROWN!
UNCLE?

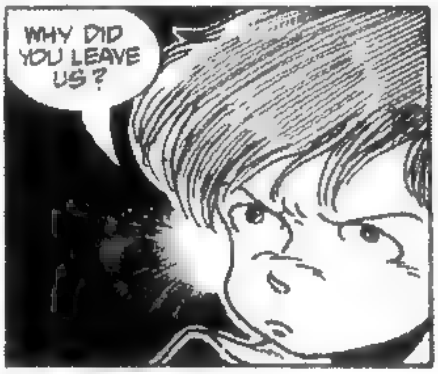
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU!
SQUEEZE!

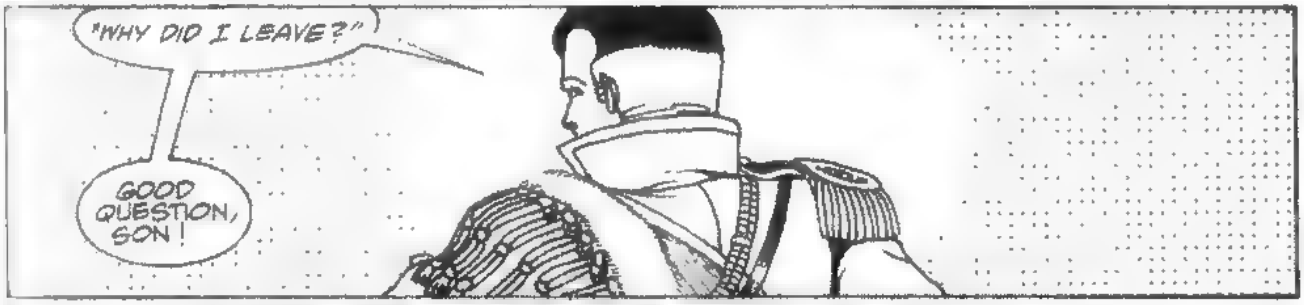

AND WHO IS YOUR OTHER FRIEND?
HER NAME IS ASRIAL!
PLEASED TO MEET YOU!

JEREMY TALKS A LOT ABOUT YOU!
OH, HE DOES, DOES HE? NOT ALL OF IT BAD, I HOPE! AR!AR!AR!

ANYWAYS, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALL!
HUG SNUG
DAD!!

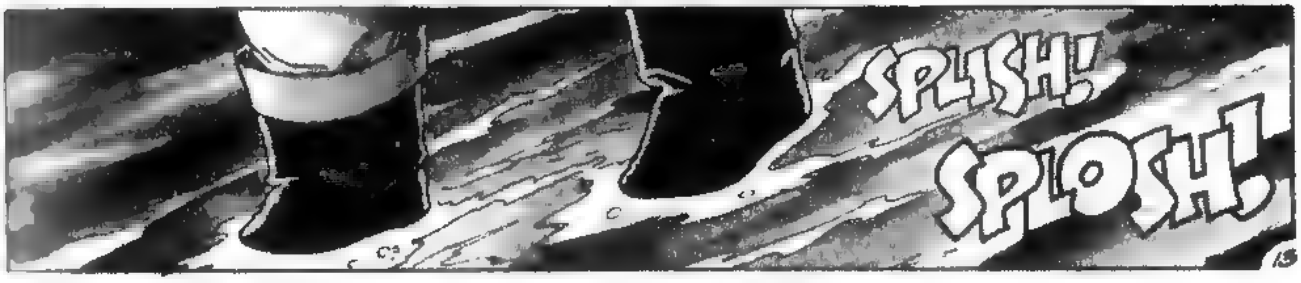
WHAT IS IT, JEREMY?

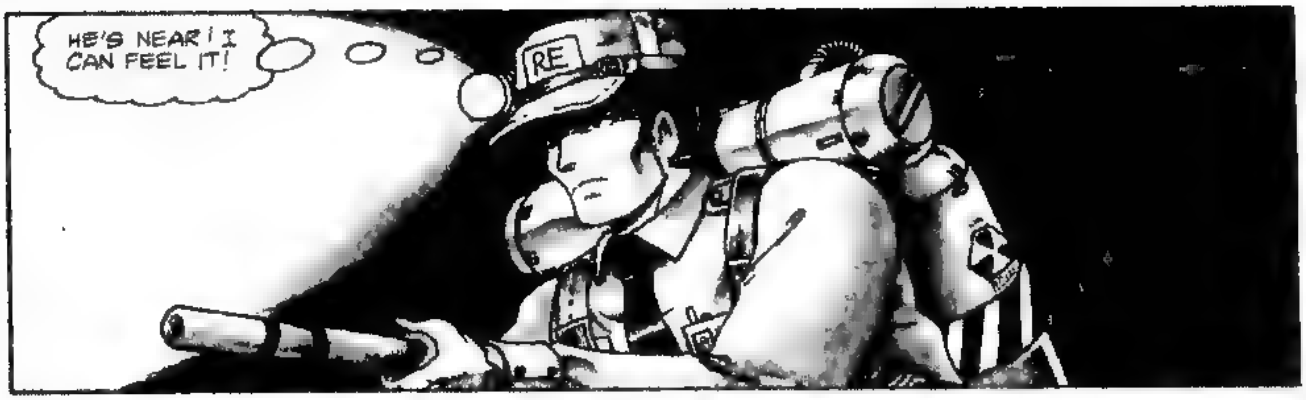

WHY DID YOU LEAVE US?


"WHY DID I LEAVE?"
GOOD QUESTION, SON!

HAVE A SEAT EVERYONE I WILL TELL YOU THE TALE AS TO HOW I CAME HERE...

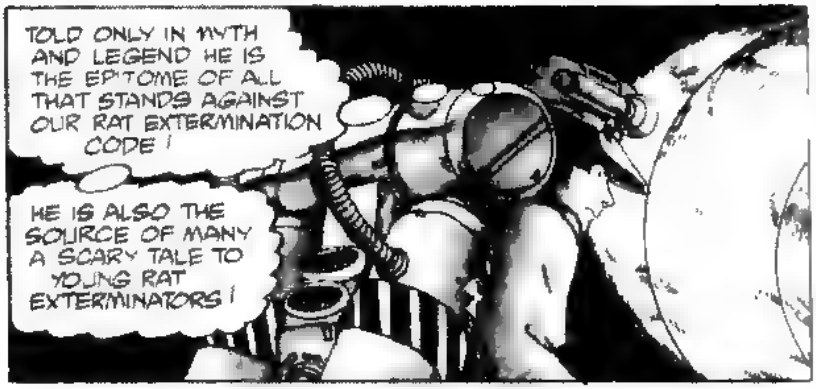
AND WHY I CAN NEVER LEAVE!


SPLISH!
SPLOSH!


HE'S NEAR! I CAN FEEL IT!
RE

AFTER YEARS OF SEARCHING THE SEWERS OF ALMOST EVERY MAJOR CITY IN THE WORLD, MY ULTIMATE GOAL LIES VERY NEAR!

THE EXTERMINATION OF THE LEGENDARY RODENT, KING RAT!
RE


TOLD ONLY IN MYTH AND LEGEND HE IS THE EPITOME OF ALL THAT STANDS AGAINST OUR RAT EXTERMINATION CODE!
HE IS ALSO THE SOURCE OF MANY A SCARY TALE TO YOUNG RAT EXTERMINATORS!

THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE VICTOR IN THIS ULTIMATE CHALLENGE OF WILLS!

SOON IT WILL BE ALL OVER!
MY BIG PLAN IS A TOTAL SUCCESS!

WITH THE CAPTURE OF ALL THE RAT EXTERMINATORS ON THE SURFACE, THE WORLD WILL BE DEFENSELESS BEFORE THE ONSLAUGHT OF OUR RAT HORDES!

IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL WE BECOME MASTERS OF EVERYTHING!

THE ONLY ONE WHO STANDS IN OUR WAY IS THE DEADLIEST OF OUR ENEMIES BOB FEEPLE!

RAT RAGE

THOUGH HE HAS ESCAPED MANY OF OUR ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE HIM HE NOW ENTERS OUR DOMAIN!

WHERE OUR ULTIMATE WEAPON WILL DEAL THE FINAL BLOW!

THINGS DO NOT BODE WELL.. I MAY BE LOST AMONG THIS MAZE OF TUNNELS!

RRRR...

THAT SOUND OF A LARGE RODENT

I MUST BE VERY NEAR!

RRAR!

ABOVE ME!
GROWL!
WATCH IT!
SPLUSH!
FORTUNATELY MY RAT EXTERMINATOR DEFENSE TRAINING HAS HONED MY SKILLS TO RAZOR KEEN PERFECTION...
GIANT RATS CAUSED BY SCIENCE GONE MAD CAN INDEED BE A PROBLEM!
WHIP!
SKRAAK!!
OOP.
AAHHHH!!

RRRR - AA RRR!
T IS DONE! OUR ENEMY
G NO LONGER WITH US!
NOT QUITE!
YOU!
YES, ME, KING RAT! YOUR GIANT RODENT STOOD NO CHANCE AGAINST A TRAINED RAT EXTERMINATOR AND A GOOD SHOT OF PREGNETO CONOXIDE!
YOUR REIGN OF PESTILENCE IS AT AN END!

GRRR!! YOU HAVE THWARTED ME FOR THE LAST TIME, BOB FEEPLE!

PREPARE TO MEET YOUR DOOM!

SLAP!

KRACK!

UHHHH!
WHAT HAPPENED?
THE SPELL IS BROKEN!

YAY!
YIPPEE!
WOORAY!
OH, THANK YOU! OUR SAVIOR!
YOU HAVE BROKEN THE SPELL OF KING RAT!
HIS ROD HELD US IN A HYPNOTIC TRANCE WE THANK YOU!

FOOLS! DID YOU THINK I WOULD BE DEFEATED SO EASILY?!

LOOK OUT! HE'S GOT A DIMENSIONAL BOMB!!
RUN!

A WHAT?

BAH-HUMM!!

AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW.. HERE I WAS!

AT FIRST I THOUGHT THAT I WAS TO BE EXECUTED FOR BEING THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ELIMINATING SO MANY OF THEIR KIND!

BUT IT SEEMED THAT THERE WERE TWO KINDS OF RATS ...THE RATS WHO LIVE IN OUR WORLD AND THE RATS FROM DIMENSION X!

AND SINCE THEY WERE UNDER THE SPELL OF KING RAT, THEY DIDN'T BLAME ME FOR WHAT I WAS DOING!

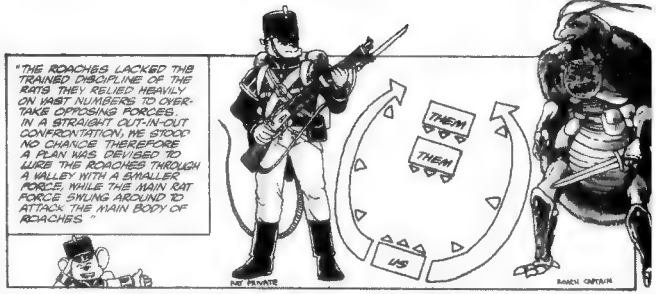
"AFTER THAT WAS CLEARED UP, THE PROCESS OF CLEANING UP THE REMAINING ELEMENTS OF KING RAT'S REIGN BEGAN. IT SEEMED THAT HE WAS SO OBSESSED WITH CONQUERING OUR WORLD, HE LET HIS OWN WORLD CRUMBLE..

"IT WAS NEARLY OVER-RUN BY BARBARIC ROACH HORDES! LONG TIME FOES OF THE RATS, THE ROACHES BEGAN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION AND STARTED A MURDEROUS RAMPAGE THROUGHOUT DIMENSION-X!

"THERE WAS LITTLE TIME. USING WHAT SKILLS I HAD, THE TASK OF FORMING A MILITIA AND THEN A REGULAR ARMY WAS UNDERTAKEN IN ORDER TO REPEL THE ROACHES!

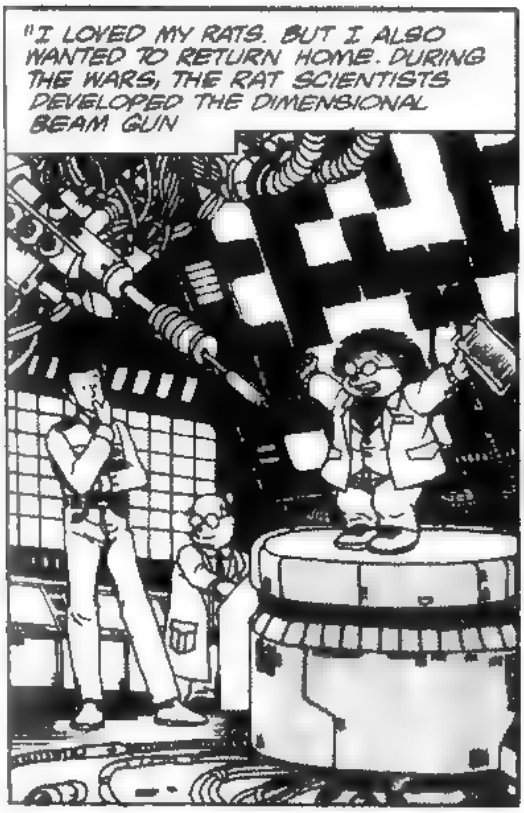
"WORKING FEVERISHLY, A STRATEGY WAS FORMULATED IN ORDER TO MEET THE ENEMY AND TURN THEM BACK ONCE AND FOR ALL. IT WOULD BE THEIR TRIAL BY FIRE!"

"THE ROACHES LACKED THE TRAINED DISCIPLINE OF THE RATS THEY RELIED HEAVILY ON VAST NUMBERS TO OVERTAKE OPPOSING FORCES. IN A STRAIGHT CUT-IN-OUT CONFRONTATION, WE STOOD NO CHANCE THEREFORE A PLAN WAS DEVISED TO LURE THE ROACHES THROUGH A VALLEY WITH A SMALLER FORCE, WHILE THE MAIN RAT FORCE SWUNG AROUND TO ATTACK THE MAIN BODY OF ROACHES."

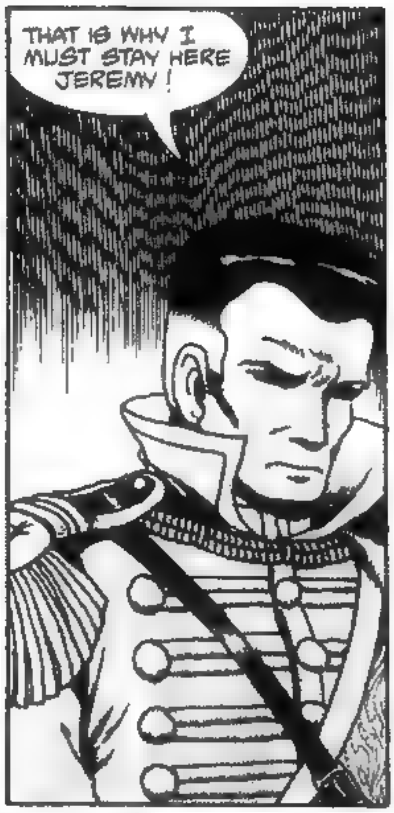


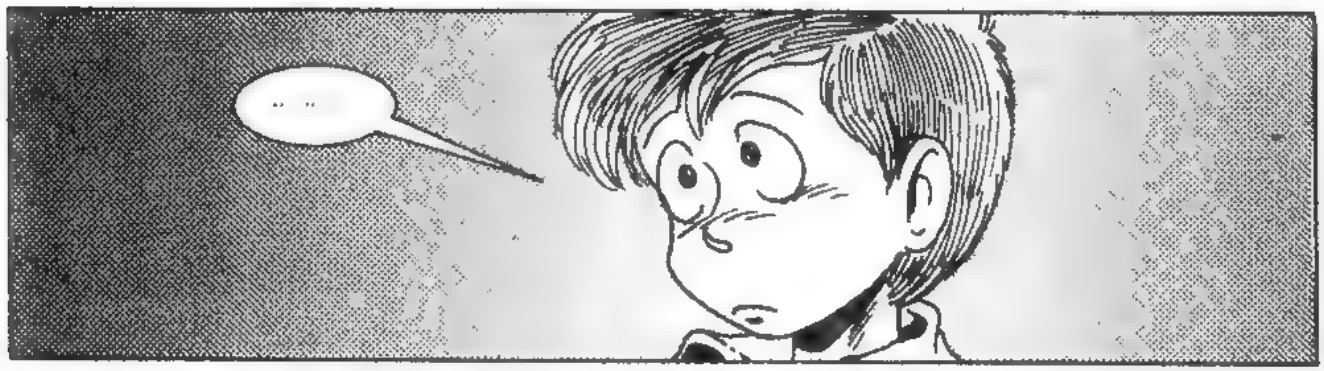
"IT WAS A FEROCIOUS BATTLE AND MANY BRAVE SOULS GAVE THEIR LIVES, BUT THE BRAVERY OF THE RATS PROVED TO BE THE DECISIVE FACTOR. AND THE BATTLE WAS WON DIMENSION-X WAS SAVED!

"UPON THE RETURN OF OUR VICTORIOUS ARMY, THE MASSES GAVE US A HEROES' WELCOME! AFTER THE EXTENT OF OUR VICTORY WAS RECOGNIZED, WE ALL KNEW THAT IT WOULD BE ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE ROACHES WOULD SURRENDER AND PEACE RESTORED TO THE KINGDOM. DURING THAT TIME, I WAS MADE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF BY THE RATS!"

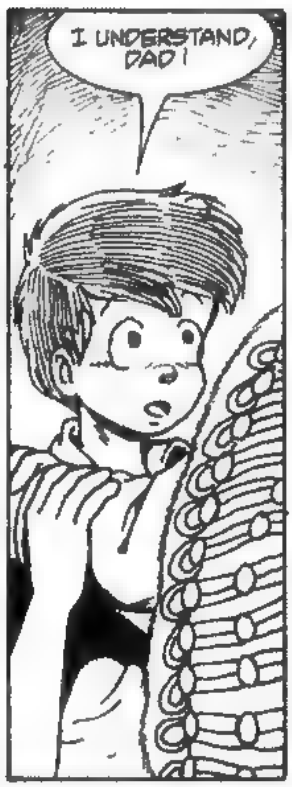

"I LOVED MY RATS. BUT I ALSO WANTED TO RETURN HOME. DURING THE WARS, THE RAT SCIENTISTS DEVELOPED THE DIMENSIONAL BEAM GUN

"IT WAS THEN I LEARNED THAT MY EXPOSURE TO PREGNETO CONOXIDE PREVENTED MY RETURN. MY CELL STRUCTURE WOULD BECOME UNSTABLE IF I WERE TO BE EXPOSED TO THE GUN'S RADIATION "
BOOM!


THAT IS WHY I MUST STAY HERE JEREMY!


. . .

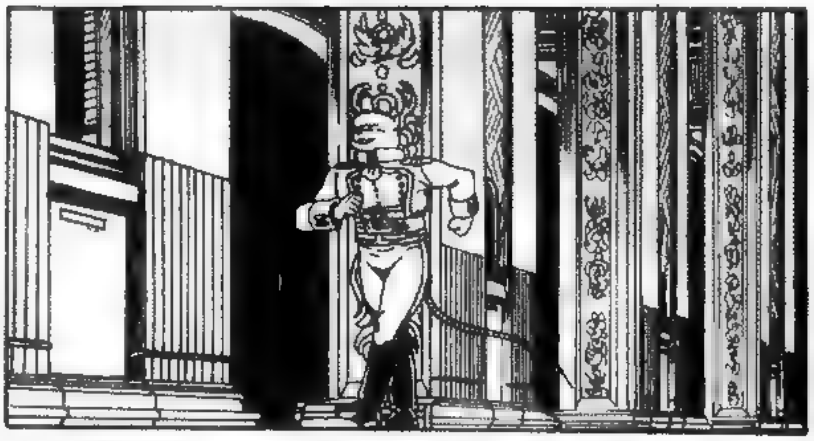
IT IS NOT BY CHOICE I STAY. SOME-DAY IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO RETURN TO YOU, RICKY, AND YOUR MOTHER!
UNTIL THEN BE STRONG!


I UNDERSTAND, DAD!

THANK YOU, SON
HUG!

SO NOW, LET'S HAVE A BIG PARTY TO CELEBRATE YOUR ARRIVAL!

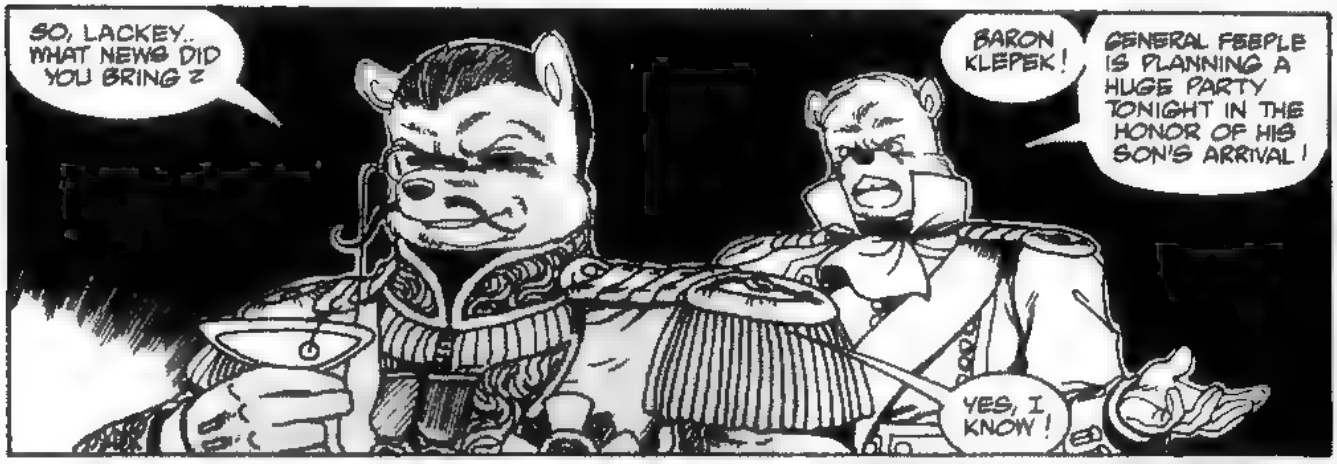
A GRAND PARTY TONIGHT!



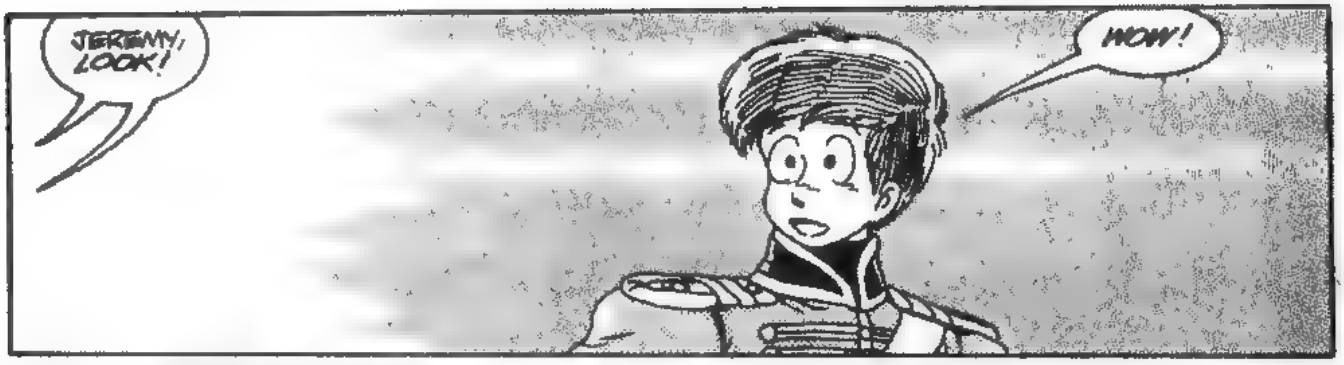
NOKKITY!
NOK!
NOK!
YES?
I MUST SPEAK TO BARON KLEBEK!
WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS?

I THINK THE BARON MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW GENERAL FEEPLE WILL BE THROWING A BIG GALA TONIGHT!

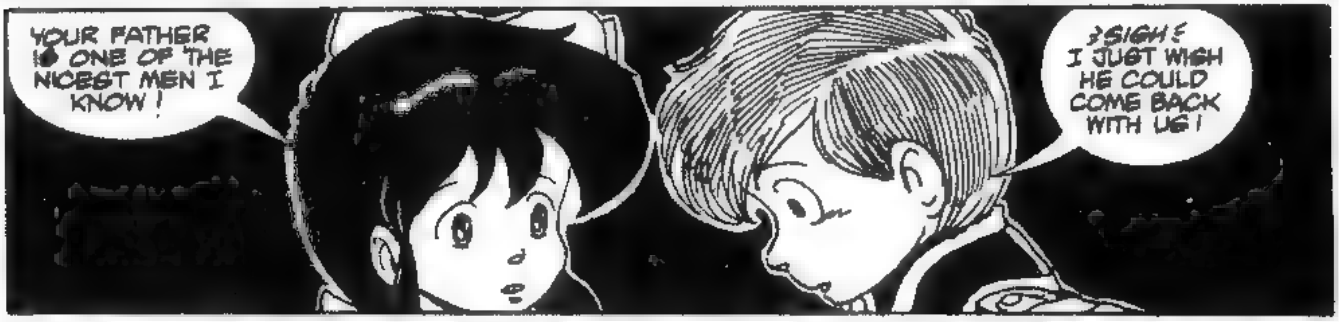
COME IN...


SO, LACKEY.. WHAT NEWS DID YOU BRING?
BARON KLEPEK!
GENERAL FEEPLE IS PLANNING A HUGE PARTY TONIGHT IN THE HONOR OF HIS SON'S ARRIVAL!
YES, I KNOW!

FOR YEARS I HAVE WAITED TO COMPLETE MY TAKEOVER OF POWER FROM THIS UPSTART HUMAN!
HEH! HEH!
EVIL STANCE!!
THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE WILL SOON PRESENT ITSELF AS HIS GUARD WILL BE AT ITS LOWEST POINT..
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO, EXACTLY?
ALL IN GOOD TIME
AS SOON AS MY CONTACTS ASSURE ME ALL IS WELL, THE SCHEME WILL BE SET IN MOTION! WITH FEEPLE OUT OF THE WAY, WE CAN WALTZ RIGHT IN AND CLAIM THE GOVERNMENT FOR OURSELVES!
A TOAST, GENTLERATS! TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR PLAN AND THE RETURN OF OUR EXILED MONARCH.. KING RAT!
HMMMM... NOT BAD.


JEREMY, LOOK!
WOW!

YOU TWO LOOK GREAT!
WHY, THANK YOU, JEREMY...
YOUR FATHER HAD THESE SPECIALLY MADE FOR US!


YOUR FATHER IS ONE OF THE NICEST MEN I KNOW!
SIGH! I JUST WISH HE COULD COME BACK WITH US!

DON'T WORRY, SOMEDAY HE WILL RETURN. I KNOW IT!
I SURE HOPE SO!

LET'S GO HAVE FUN!
HEY!
SNATCH!

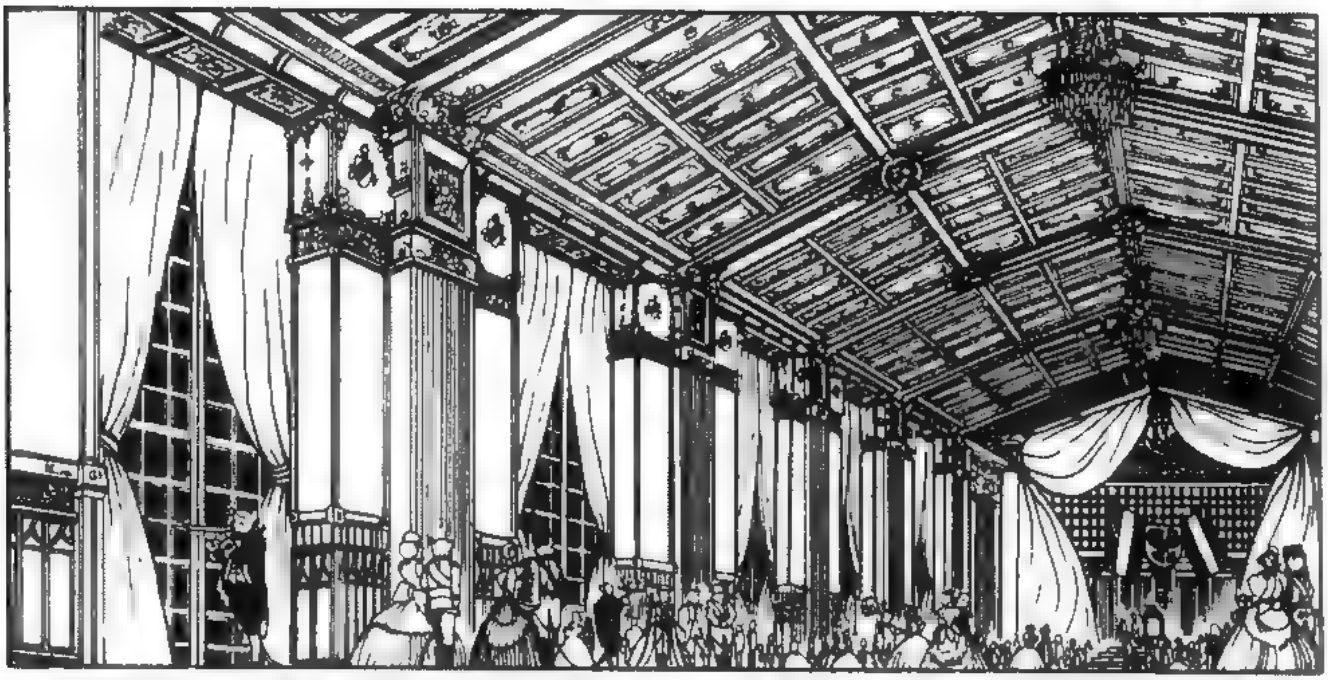
NINJA HIGH SCHOOL

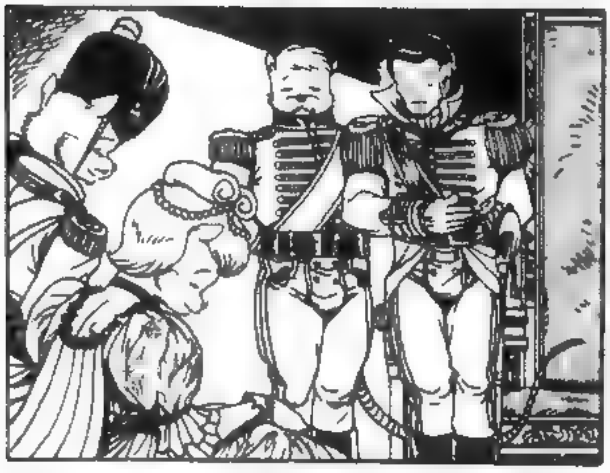
BEN DUNN
CREATOR

DAN NAKROSIS
LETTERER

CHRIS ULM
EDITOR

"OF RATS AND MEN"





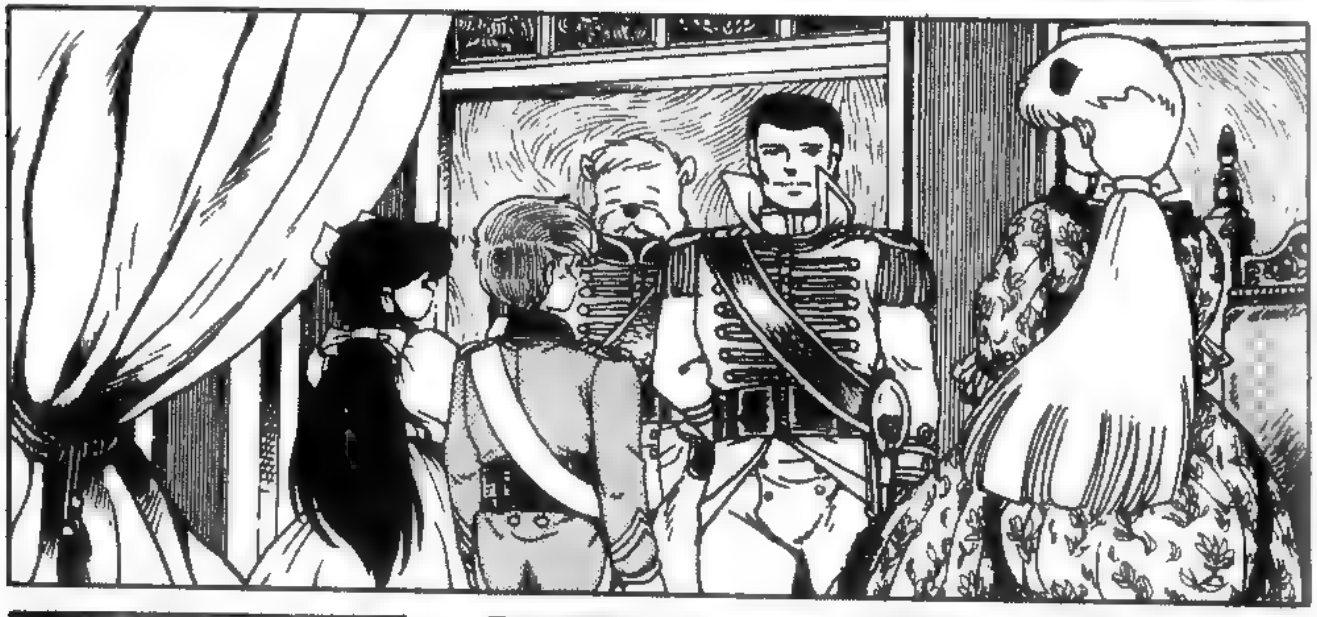
AN EXCELLENT PARTY, MY LORD!
THANK YOU, PASHA! THIS IS A SPECIAL OCCASION AND I PRIDE MYSELF ON PUTTING ON AS EXQUISITE AN ASSEMBLAGE AS POSSIBLE!

IF ONLY I HAD SOMEONE TO SHARE IT WITH...

TAP! TAP!
ANNOUNCING THE ARRIVAL OF JEREMY AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS, PRINCESS ASRIAL AND ICHI-KUN !CHINOHE!
PERHAPS TOO QUICKLY... WHERE IS THAT LITTLE BOY I LEFT BEHIND?
YOUR SON IS GROWING UP QUICKLY MY LORD...

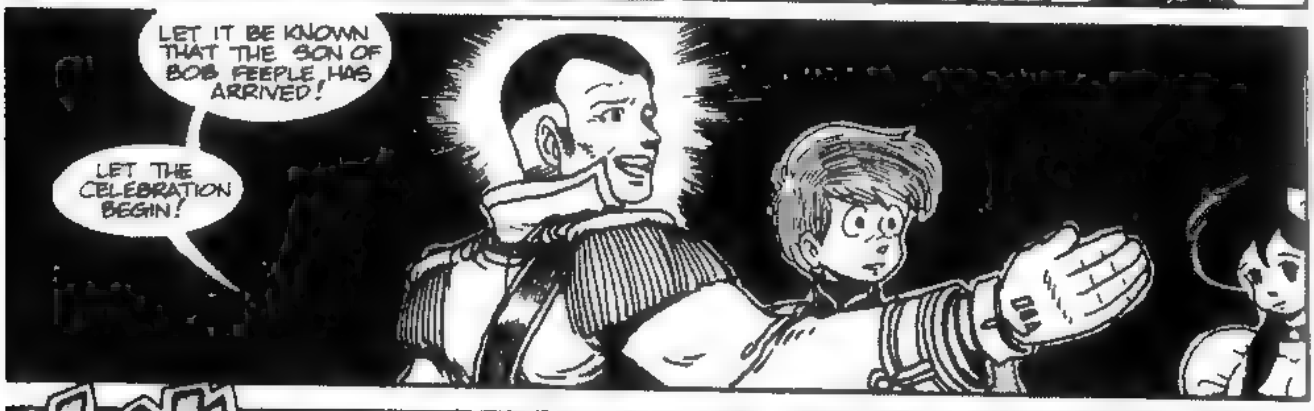
AH... IF ONLY OUR CHILDREN WOULD REMAIN SMALL FOREVER...

...ALAS.. IT CANNOT BE... TIME MUST CONTINUE ON.
RE



DAD...

WELCOME, SON!


LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THE SON OF BOB FEEPLE HAS ARRIVED!
LET THE CELEBRATION BEGIN!

YAY!
YAY!!

SO, HOW DO YOU LIKE IT HERE SO FAR, JEREMY?
GREAT DAD! IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU BUILT THIS ALL BY YOURSELF!

WELL, NOT ENTIRELY, SON!
I HAD A LOT OF SUPPORT FROM OTHERS, LIKE OLD PASHA.
INDEED SIR... I'VE BEEN IN YOUR FATHER'S SERVICE FOR MANY YEARS!

OLD PASHA STOOD UP FOR ME WHEN I ARRIVED HERE... IF NOT FOR HIM, I MIGHT NOT BE HERE TODAY...
JUST REMEMBER JEREMY... WE ALWAYS WILL NEED OTHERS! NO ONE CAN REMAIN ALONE FOREVER! BUT EVEN THOUGH I HAVE MANY FRIENDS...
...IT HURTS ME THAT I CAN NEVER HOLD YOUR MOTHER AGAIN...

MOM ALSO MISSES YOU VERY MUCH!

WHEN I FIRST MET YOUR MOTHER, I KNEW I WOULD SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE WITH HER...
I WISH I COULD BRING HER HERE, BUT AS ONE GETS OLDER THE BODY CANNOT TOLERATE THE TRANSFER...

THAT'S WHY I BLACKED OUT...
YES, JEREMY! AN AFTEREFFECT THAT MIGHT PROVE FATAL TO YOUR MOTHER!
I COULD NEVER RISK HER LIFE...

NOW, LOOK AT ME, JEREMY! HERE I AM THE MOST POWERFUL BEING ALIVE IN DIMENSION X! I COULD HAVE ANYTHING I DESIRE!
BUT I WOULD GLADLY GIVE IT ALL TO RETURN TO YOU AND YOUR MOTHER!
POWER IS NOTHING IF YOU HAVE NO ONE TO SHARE IT WITH!
DAD..

YOU MUSTN'T GIVE UP HOPE! THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE!

YOUR MOTHER RAISED YOU WELL... YOU HAVE A STRONG CHARACTER THAT SHOWS A HOPE FOR THE FUTURE...
IF I WERE YOUNGER I MIGHT SHARED YOUR VISION... BUT AGE HAS CLOUDED MY ENTHUSIASM...

I'M JUST GRATEFUL THAT YOU'RE HERE!
YOUR PRESENCE HAS GIVEN ME MORE JOY THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE!

JEREMY'S FATHER EXUDES A REGAL NOBILITY THAT I HAVE NEVER ENCOUNTERED IN AN EARTHMAN...
IS IT POSSIBLE THAT JEREMY MIGHT BE AS VIRTUOUS AS HIS FATHER?

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... I NEVER THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE... THAT JEREMY'S FATHER WOULD BE SUCH A LEADER! ALL OF THE STORIES ABOUT HIM THAT GRANDFATHER TOLD ME MUST BE TRUE!

DON'T BE GLUM. AS LONG AS WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER, NO DISTANCE WILL EVER AFFECT US! WE WILL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER IN SPIRIT!

ALWAYS!

DAD... HOW LONELY YOU MUST BE.

PERFECT...
SOON ALL SHALL BE MINE!
JEREMY? WOULD YOU LIKE TO DANCE?
NOT REALLY, ICHI...
JEREMY! IT'S NOT POLITE TO TURN DOWN SUCH A DELIGHTFUL INVITATION!
!
ESPECIALLY FROM SUCH A LOVELY WOMAN... NOW YOU TWO JUST HAVE FUN!
LET'S NOT LET ANYTHING SPOIL THIS EVENING!
MY FATHER'S RIGHT! PLEASE FORGIVE MY IMPUDENCE, ICHI...
WOULD YOU CARE TO ACCOMPANY ME?
OH, JEREMY!
I'D LOVE TO!

THEY MAKE A CHARMING COUPLE...
INDEED...
THIS MUST BE A DREAM...
ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN, HUMAN... IT WON'T LAST LONG...

BOOM!
THE KING IS FALSE!
LONG LIVE KING RAT!
HOLD IT!
NOBODY MOVE!
STAND BACK, SIRE!
BLAM!!
PING!
AAHHH!!

SO NOW IT COMES FULL CIRCLE, MY EMPEROR! THE CUP OF POWER WILL CHANGE HANDS ONCE AGAIN AND THE TRUE KING OF THE LAND WILL RETURN!
BY ALL THAT IS TRUE TO RATKIND, I CANNOT ALLOW THIS FOLLY TO CONTINUE!

SO BARON KLEBEK... EVER DOES AMBITION CLOUD THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO SEEK TO USURP THEIR RULER!
TRAITORS EVENTUALLY ARE REMEMBERED AS SUCH! YOU TAKE A GRAVE RISK BY SHOWING YOUR TRUE COLORS!
LET ME MY KING...

I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER THE FACE THAT FINALLY TOOK YOUR CROWN!

I CANNOT ALLOW THAT... NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT!
IT WOULD BE FOOLISH OF ME TO CHALLENGE A SWORDSMAN SUCH AS YOURSELF...

THEREFORE, I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF POISONING THE WINE YOU DRANK EARLIER!
?!
I COULD SHOOT YOU NOW, BUT THAT IS TOO EASY... TOO QUICK! I WANT TO SEE YOU SUFFER! LIKE OUR KING RAT SUFFERED!
WOBBLE...

HOW DO YOU FEEL? DIZZY? TIRED?
YOU FIEND!

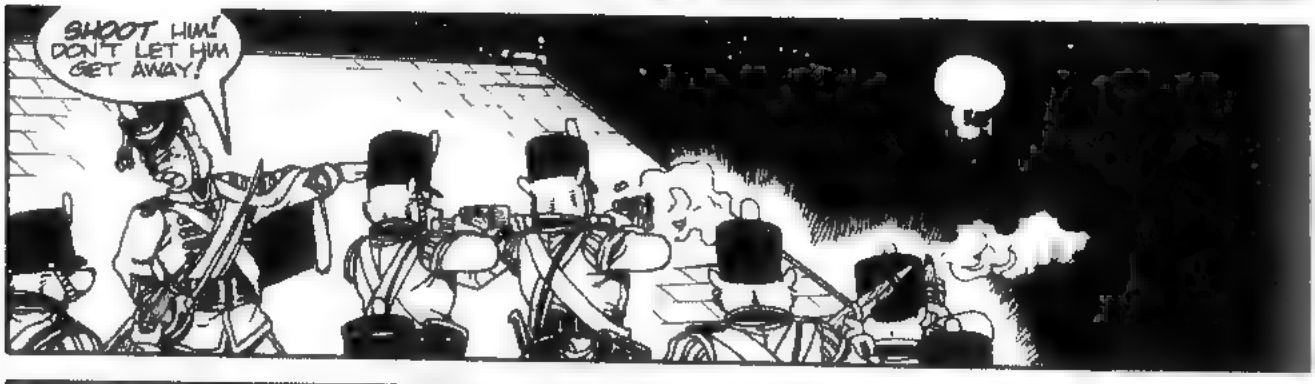
SIRE!
MR. FEEPLE!

UHHHHH...

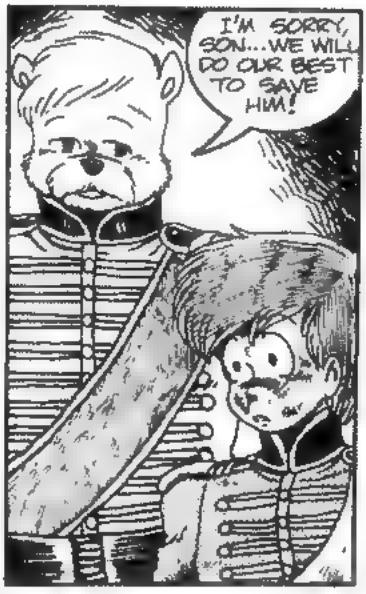
ICH?!
JEREMY?

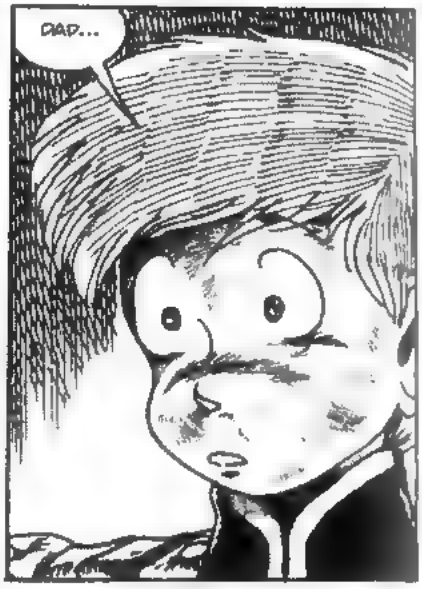
THANK GOODNESS SHE'S ALL RIGHT... IF ANYTHING HAD HAPPENED TO HER!
WHO COULD HAVE DONE ALL THIS?
JEREMY! STOP THEM! THEY POISONED YOUR FATHER!
WHAT?! WHY YOU!
I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!
WAK!
ONE SIDE, BOY! YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR US!
LET'S GO!

I COME HERE TO PROCLAIM THAT THE THRONE HAS BEEN LIBERATED FROM A FALSE KING!
SOON HE WILL PERISH AND I SHALL RETURN WITH THE RIGHTFUL HEIR!
LONG LIVE KING RAT!


SHOOT HIM! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

HURRY! WE MUST TAKE HIM TO THE COURT, PHYSICIAN!


I'M SORRY, SON...WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO SAVE HIM!


DAD...

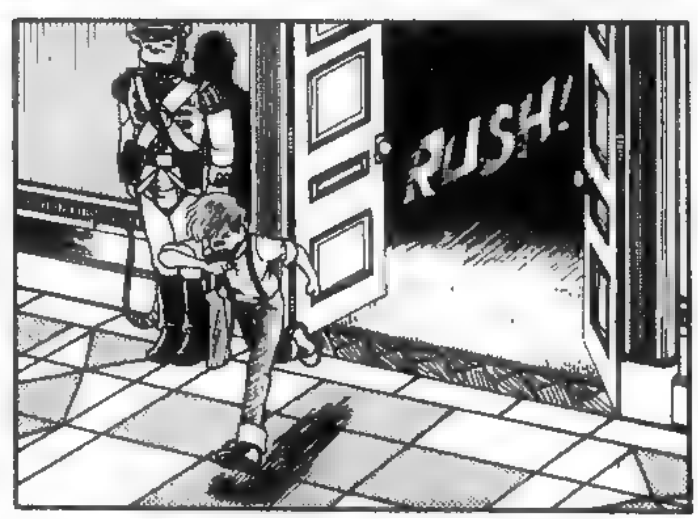
HOW IS HE?
NOT GOOD, I'M AFRAID...

THE POISON IS A SLOW ACTING MIXTURE THAT I HAVE NEVER BEFORE ENCOUNTERED!
IS THERE A CURE?

NONE THAT I KNOW OF!
HOW LONG DOES HE HAVE?
TWENTY FOUR HOURS, PERHAPS...

NO! I WON'T LET HIM DIE!
TAKE IT EASY, SON! IT'S NOT EASY FOR ANY OF US!

GET AWAY FROM ME! IT'S YOUR FAULT HE'S HERE TO BEGIN WITH! IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT THAT HE'S DYING!!
I HATE YOU ALL!


RUSH!

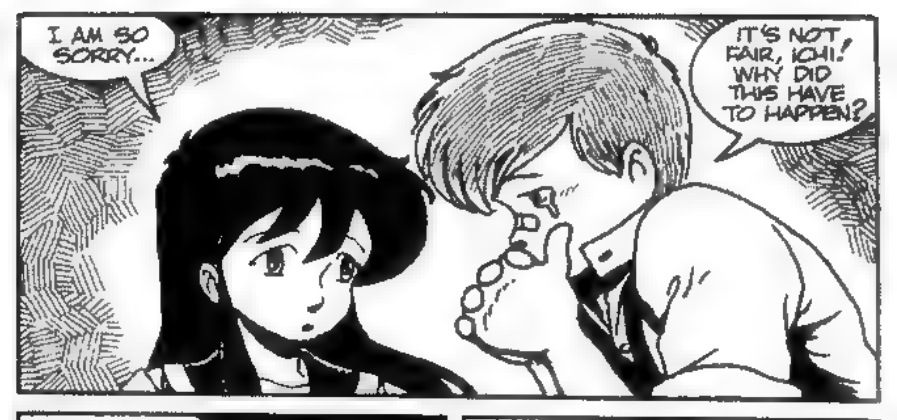
SUCH AN ANGRY YOUNG MAN!
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOUR FATHER WAS POISONED BY AN ASSASSIN?

I UNDERSTAND...
IT IS A TERRIBLE THING!

BUT WORSE... HE HAS MANY OF HIS FATHER'S TRAITS...

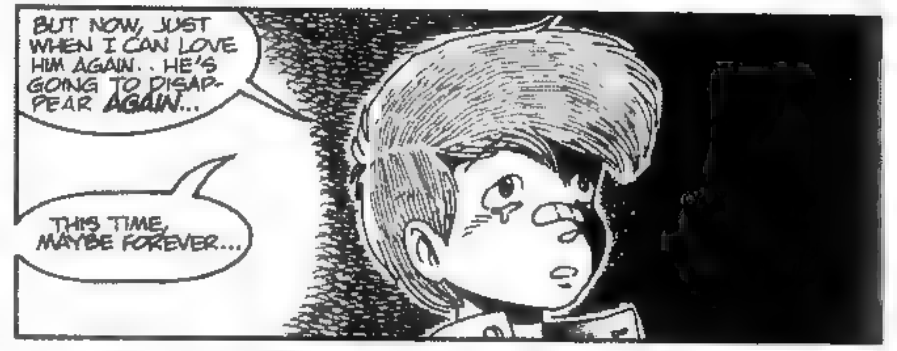
HEAVEN HELP US ALL SHOULD HE TAKE UP HIS FATHER'S PREVIOUS OCCUPATION...

JEREMY?


I AM SO SORRY...
IT'S NOT FAIR, ICHI! WHY DID THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN?

YOUR FATHER IS A BRAVE MAN JEREMY! HE TOOK MANY RISKS AND DANGERS TO DO WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS RIGHT!

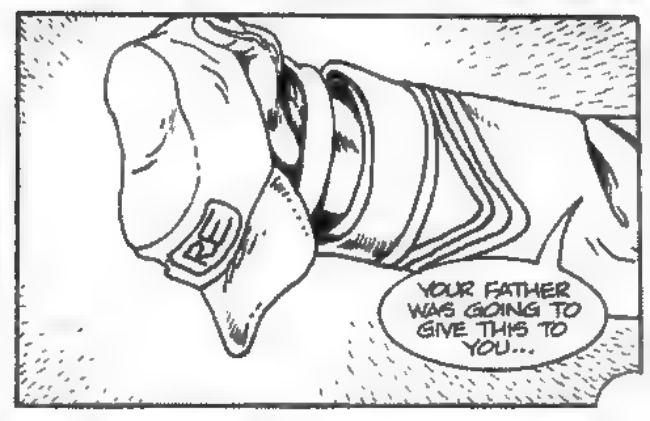
I'VE ALWAYS ADMIRED HIM, ICHI .. SINCE I WAS A KID I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE LIKE HIM!
WHEN HE DISAPPEARED MY WHOLE WORLD COLLAPSED ... PERHAPS I WAS TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND..

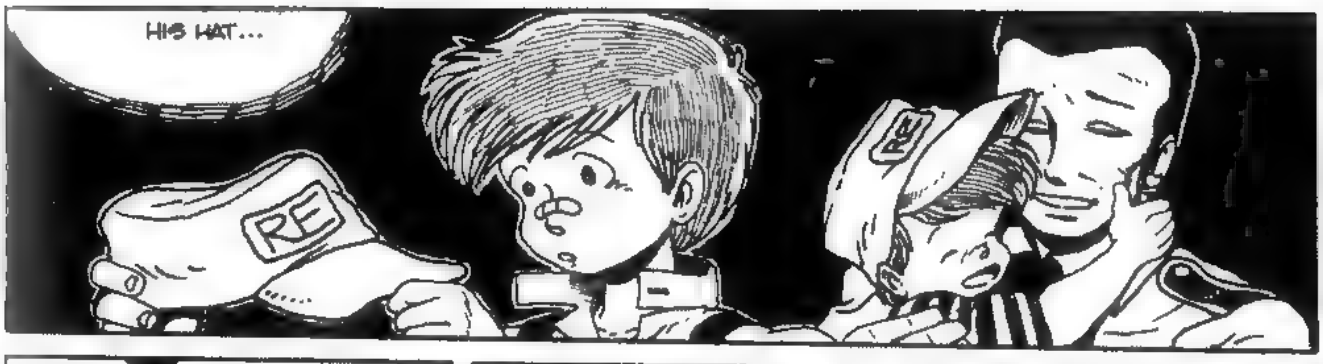

BUT NOW, JUST WHEN I CAN LOVE HIM AGAIN.. HE'S GOING TO DISAPPEAR AGAIN...
THIS TIME, MAYBE FOREVER...

PERHAPS NOT...

HUH?

CAPTAIN PASHA!
YOU LEFT BEFORE I COULD GIVE YOU SOMETHING.


YOUR FATHER WAS GOING TO GIVE THIS TO YOU...


HIS HAT...
RE

CAPTAIN PASHA... I'M SORRY ABOUT HOW I ACTED...
NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE, SON... IT IS QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE TO BE THAT WAY.

BUT WHAT I CAME TO TELL YOU... THERE MAY BE A WAY TO SAVE YOUR FATHER!
WHAT? HOW?

THE POISON EMPLOYED IS A VERY RARE MIXTURE, INDEED, BUT IT IS NOT WITHOUT AN ANTIDOTE AS WE HAD EARLIER FEARED... THE ONLY PROBLEM IS THAT THE MAIN INGREDIENT CAN ONLY BE FOUND FROM THE ANUCHA TREE FOUND IN THE BALASHU FOREST...
THEN LET'S GO!

WAIT!
WHAT?

BALASHU IS A FORBIDDEN ZONE OCCUPIED BY THE VERY WORST OF OUR DIMENSION! IT IS A PLACE OF TREMENDOUS RISK AND DANGER!
IF WE UNDERTAKE SUCH A VENTURE WE MAY VERY WELL DIE!

CAPTAIN PASHA...
I WOULD RISK EVERYTHING FOR MY FATHER!

NO! JEREMY, YOU MUSTN'T!
I'VE GOT TO ICHI! IF THERE IS EVEN THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE OF SAVING HIM, I MUST DO IT!

THEN I'M COMING WITH YOU!
NO, ICHI! NOT THIS TIME! ABSOLUTELY NOT!
JEREMY! I'M NOT A HELPLESS FEMALE! I HAVE MANY SKILLS THAT COULD PROVE USEFUL! HE IS MY UNCLE AFTER ALL!

.....

ALRIGHT ICHI... TOGETHER THEN...

AND YOU WILL NEED A GUIDE! YOUR FATHER IS A GOOD MAN, JEREMY! I WOULD GLADLY LAY MY LIFE DOWN FOR HIM!
HOWEVER, WE MUST BE CAUTIOUS! NO ONE MUST KNOW OUR INTENT!

WHY NOT?
SPIES, EVERYWHERE! ANY INTERFERENCE MAY CAUSE US TO LOSE PRECIOUS TIME!

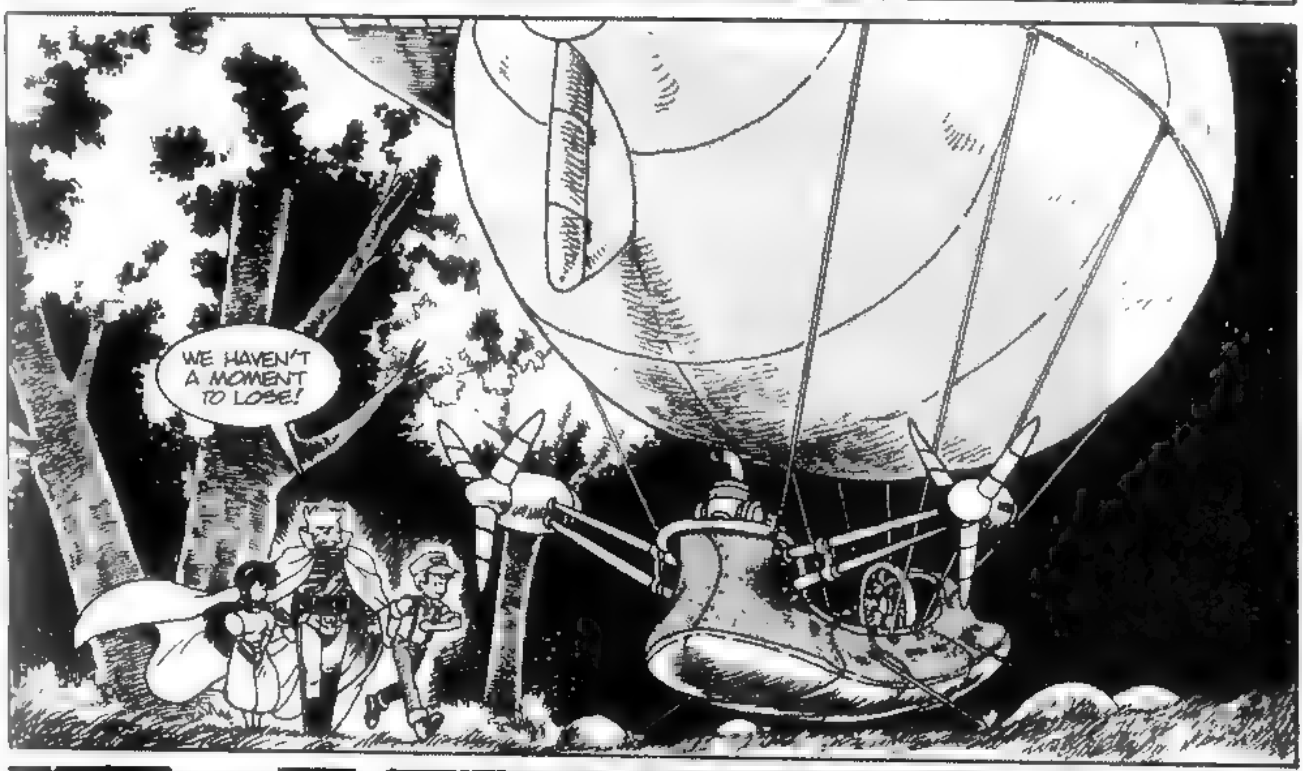
SHOULD WE TELL ASRIAL?
NO.. SHE MIGHT BE MORE HELPFUL HERE.
THERE IS NO NEED TO INVOLVE HER RECKLESSLY!

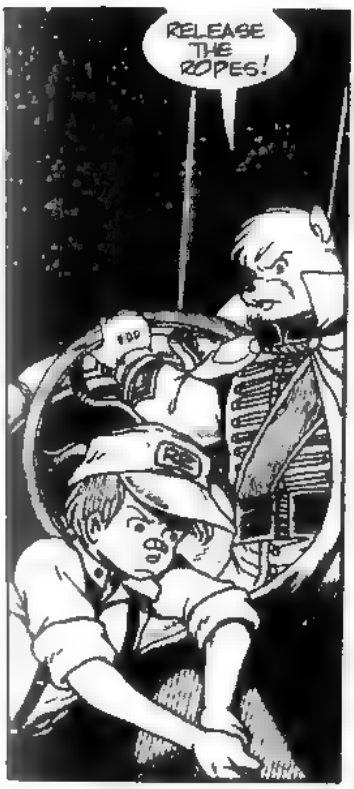
BUT HOW WILL WE GET THERE?
JUST BE READY IN FIFTEEN MINUTES!

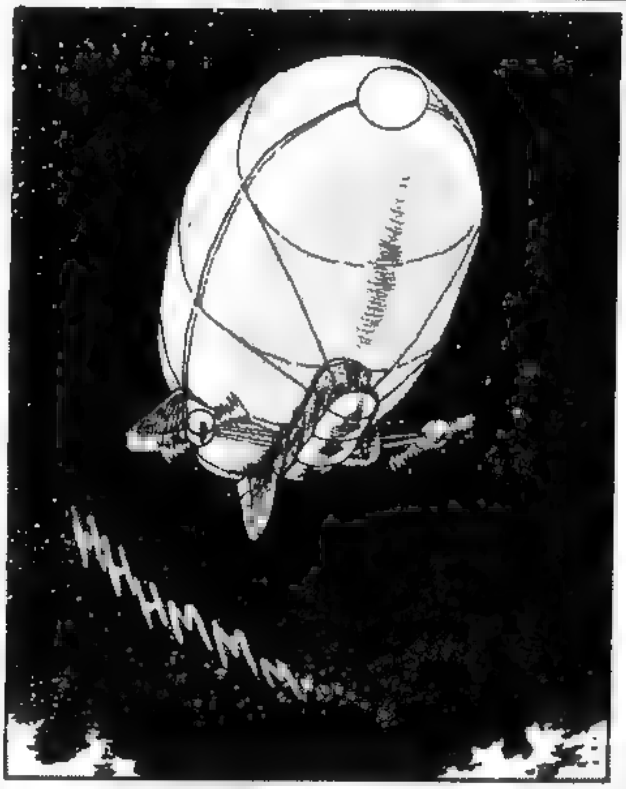
LEAVE THE TRANSPORTATION TO ME!

LATER THAT NIGHT...
QUICKLY! THIS WAY!

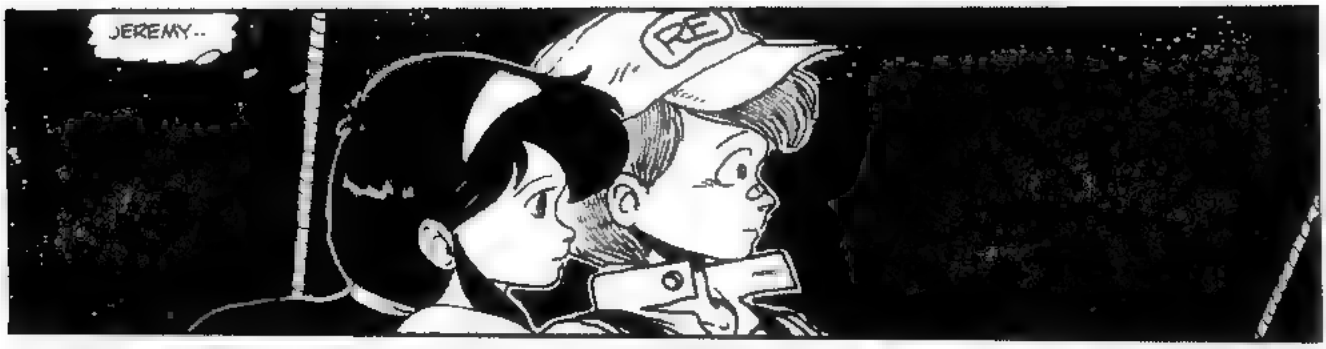
OH, MY!
AWESOME!


WE HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE!


RELEASE THE ROPES!

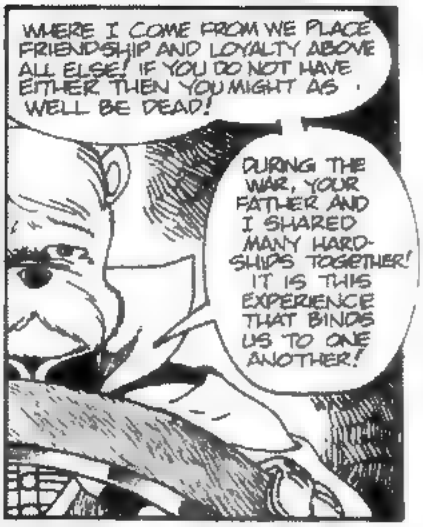

MHHMMM

WE'LL BE BACK FOR YOU, DAD.. YOU WILL LIVE! I PROMISE!

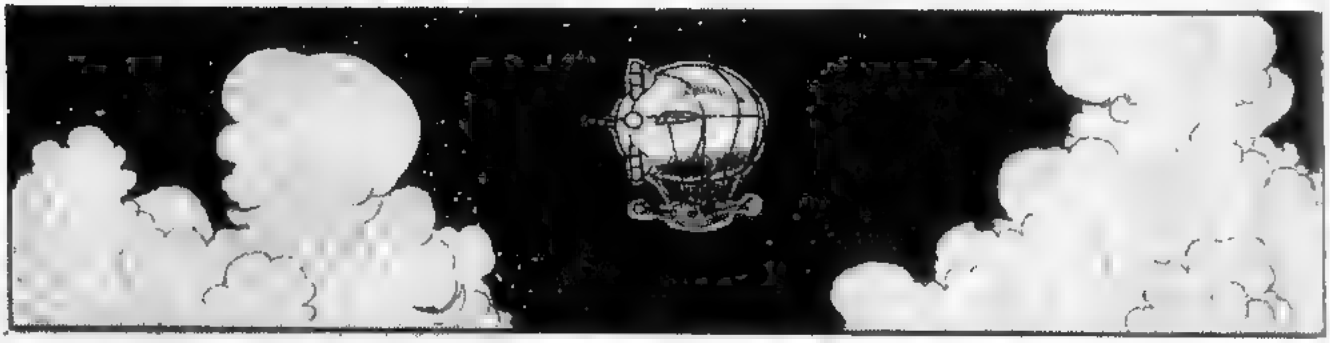

JEREMY...

CAPTAIN PASHA! HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE US TO GET THERE?
WITH A GOOD WIND, ABOUT FOUR HOURS!

TELL ME PASHA... WHY WOULD YOU RISK YOUR LIFE FOR MY FATHER?
BECAUSE, I AM YOUR FATHER'S FRIEND, MY YOUNG LORD!


WHERE I COME FROM WE PLACE FRIENDSHIP AND LOYALTY ABOVE ALL ELSE! IF YOU DO NOT HAVE EITHER THEN YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD!
DURING THE WAR, YOUR FATHER AND I SHARED MANY HARDSHIPS TOGETHER! IT IS THIS EXPERIENCE THAT BINDS US TO ONE ANOTHER!

THANK YOU FOR BEING MY FATHER'S FRIEND
THE HONOR IS MINE, YOUNG LORD...
NOW TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP... I'LL TAKE THE WATCH!



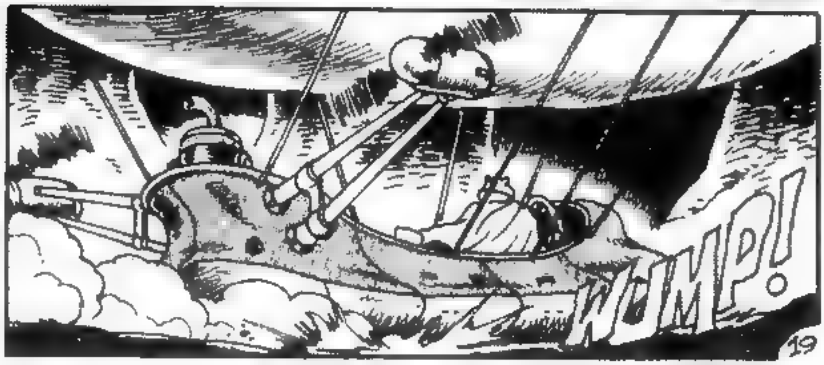
ARE WE THERE YET?
YES, MY LORD WE SHOULD BE APPROACHING THE FOREST!
STRETCH
YAWN!

OHHHH
ICH! SLEEP WELL?
RE

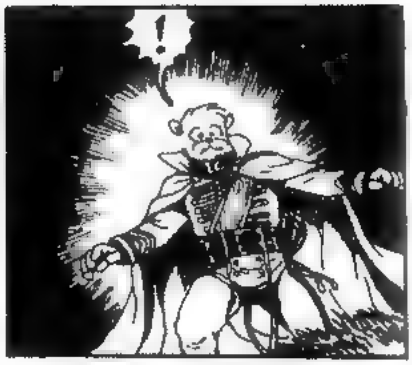
SIR, WE'VE ARRIVED!
RE

THE FOREST OF BALABH!

HANG ON! I'M GOING TO LAND!


WUMP!

THE TREE IS JUST OVER THAT RIDGE!


!

OH, NO!
WHAT?

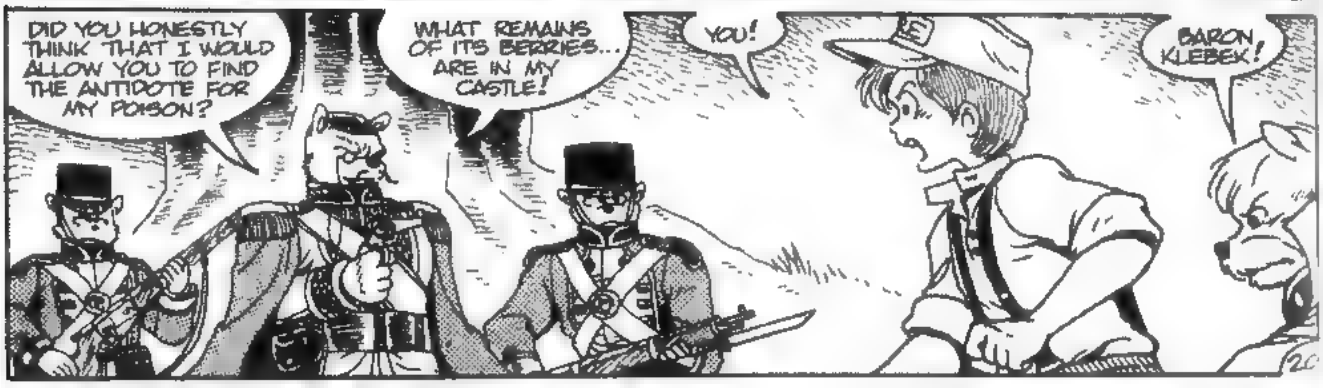
THIS IS TERRIBLE!

NO! NO!
WHO COULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING?!
THIS IS THE ONLY TREE OF ITS KIND IN OUR WORLD! WITHOUT ITS BERRIES THERE CAN BE NO ANTIDOTE!

THEN DAD IS...
I'M SORRY, JEREMY!

NO! I REFUSE TO GIVE UP!
THERE MUST BE ANOTHER TREE!

I'M AFRAID NOT, MY BOY!


DID YOU HONESTLY THINK THAT I WOULD ALLOW YOU TO FIND THE ANTIDOTE FOR MY POISON?
WHAT REMAINS OF ITS BERRIES... ARE IN MY CASTLE!
YOU!
BARON KLEBEK!

AND NOW I HAVE THE FALSE KING'S SON AS WELL!
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO WITH HIM?

IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO ALLOW HIM TO LIVE...
I HAVE SEEN TOO MANY TIMES THE EYES OF REVENGE..

...AND HE HAS THEM!
RE
IF ONLY YOU WEREN'T HIDING BEHIND THAT GUN.

BUT THIS IS WHAT MAKES US POWERFUL! FORCE! MIGHT!
IT IS WHAT MAKES US STRONG!

YOUR FATHER WANTED TO MAKE US A WEAK RACE... FOR THAT HE MUST DIE!

I SWEAR I'LL GET YOU!
YOU JUST MIGHT AT THAT, GIVEN THE CHANCE..

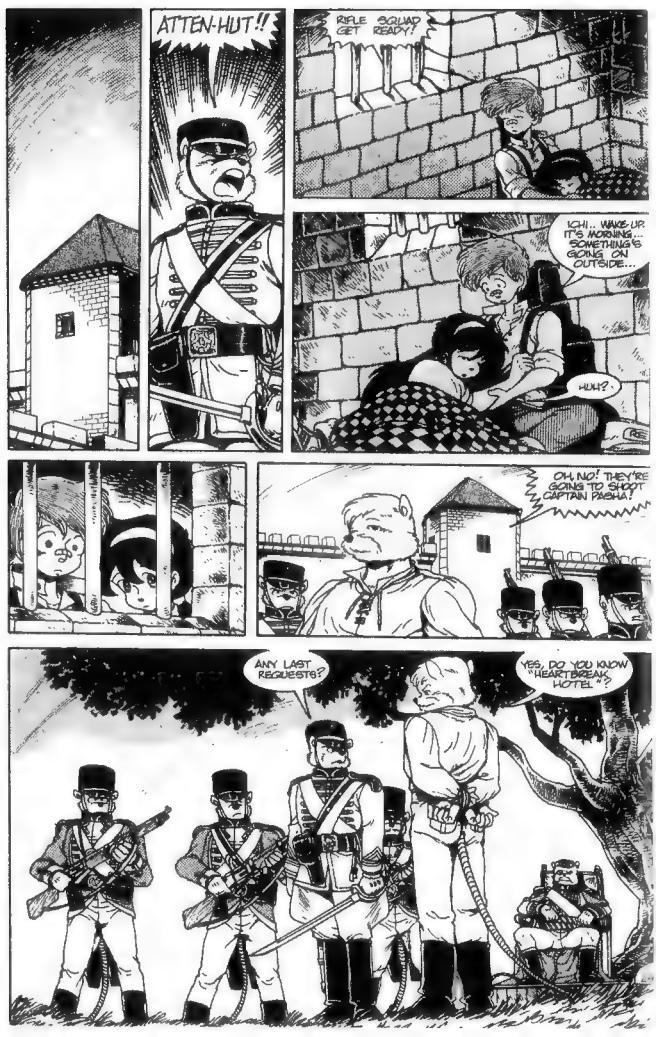
BUT I WON'T GIVE YOU THAT LUXURY!

JEREMY! DUCK!!

KA-TINK!
WHIZZZZZ....

WAK
HALT!
RE
THINK TWICE, MY PRINCE! YOU CANNOT WIN! IF HARM COMES TO ME...
YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS WILL DIE!
I CAN'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO ICHI...
I CAN'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO JEREMY...
A WISE DECISION...
GUARDS DISARM THE GIRL AND TAKE ALL OF THEM TO MY CASTLE HIDEAWAY!
HEY!
WE WILL EXECUTE THEM AT DAWN!

CHI...
I'M SORRY ABOUT ALL OF THIS... I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WHATEVER HAPPENS TO ME...
THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER HAS BEEN THE GREATEST I'VE EVER SPENT IN MY LIFE...
I, TOO HAVE NEVER REGRETTED A MOMENT WITH YOU...
THE MINUTE I SAW YOU... SOMETHING WARM WELLED UP INSIDE ME. IN SOME WAY, I THINK THAT OUR MEETING WAS DESTINED!
JEREMY I'VE NEVER ADMITTED THIS TO ANYONE, BUT YOU'RE THE FIRST BOY I'VE EVER REALLY RESPECTED!
I'VE BEEN PAMPERED MOST OF MY LIFE, JEREMY! YOU'RE THE FIRST BOYFRIEND WHO REALLY HAS ADDED SOME EXCITEMENT TO MY LIFE!
I'VE HAD DOZENS OF BOYFRIENDS... MOST OF THEM WERE DWEEBS!
BUT YOU... YOU'RE VERY SPECIAL!
SOMEHOW YOU'VE MADE MY LIFE COMPLETE!
ME TOO, ICHI...
JEREMY... I'M GOING TO ASK YOU TO DO SOMETHING THAT I'VE NEVER ASKED ANYONE TO DO FOR ME BEFORE..
ANYTHING, ICHI...


ATTEN-HUT!!
RIFLE SQUAD GET READY!
ICHI... WAKE UP. IT'S MORNING... SOMETHING'S GOING ON OUTSIDE...
HUH?
OH, NO! THEY'RE GOING TO SHOOT CAPTAIN PASHA!
ANY LAST REQUESTS?
YES, DO YOU KNOW "HEARTBREAK HOTEL"?

HA! HA! VERY AMUSING... LET'S SEE YOU LAUGH AT THE END OF A GUN BARREL!
JUST AS EASILY AS I COULD LAUGH AT YOUR FACE!

INSOLENCE!! IT WILL BE A PLEASURE TO SHOOT YOU!!
JUST BE SURE TO SHOOT STRAIGHT, YOU COCKEYED RODENT!

WE WILL! READY...

CAPTAIN PASHA!! NO!!

AUH...

BLA-UUM!

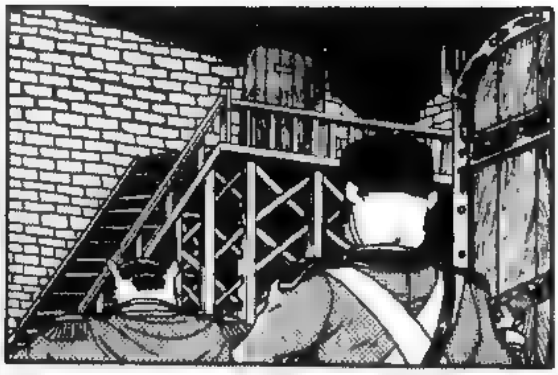
NOT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ONE WHO POSSESSES THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTERSTELLAR CONGLOMERATE!

LUCKILY, I WAS ABLE TO RETRIEVE MY ARMOR, RETURN TO DIMENSION X, AND LOCATE YOUR NEFARIOUS HIDEOUT!

YOUR PLANS FOR CONQUEST ARE ABOUT TO END...

AND IF YOU'VE HARMED ANY OF MY FRIENDS...

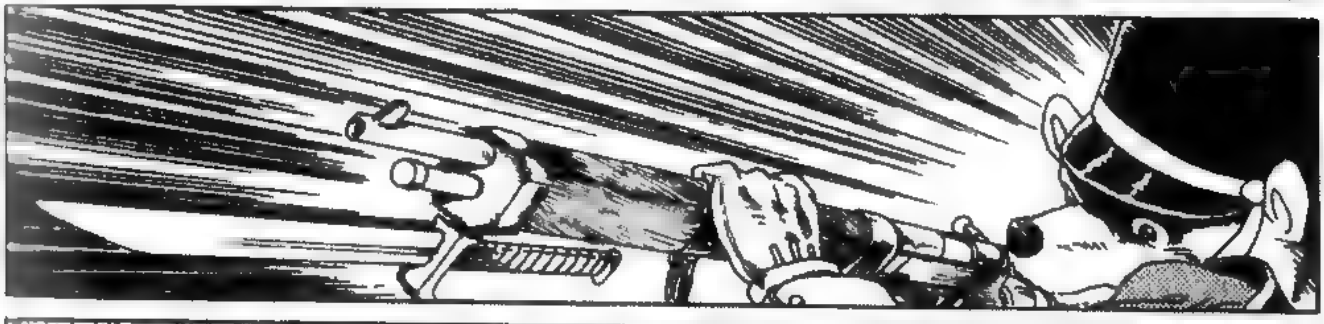
SHE IS VERY POWERFUL! BUT HER ARRIVAL IS TOO LATE! BOB FEEPLE SHALL DIE AND SO SHALL HIS SON!
YOU! COME WITH ME!



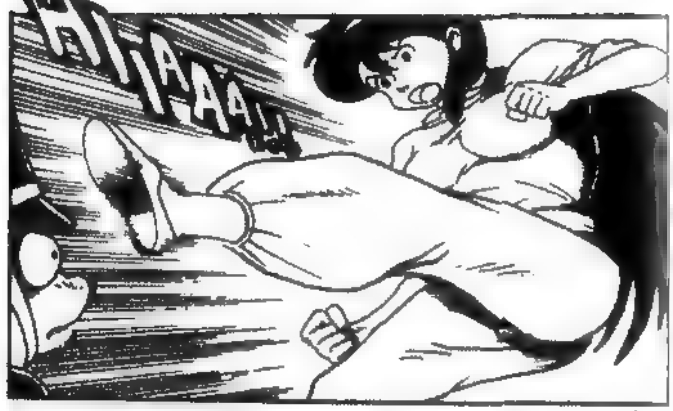
I WANT YOU TO KILL THE TWO OF THEM!

GO ABRIAL!
KREAK!!

JEREMY! LOOK OUT!



NOW THEN...
.....
BALANCE

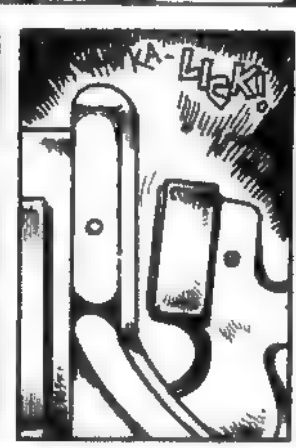

HIIAAA!!

HUMMPH...

THANKS, IQUI!
NO PROBLEM! I WAS WAITING FOR SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
!

SO IT WOULD SEEM THAT I ONCE AGAIN ACHIEVE THE UPPERHAND.. BUT THIS TIME..
I WILL NOT HESITATE... GOOD-BYE MY ANNOYING GUESTS!

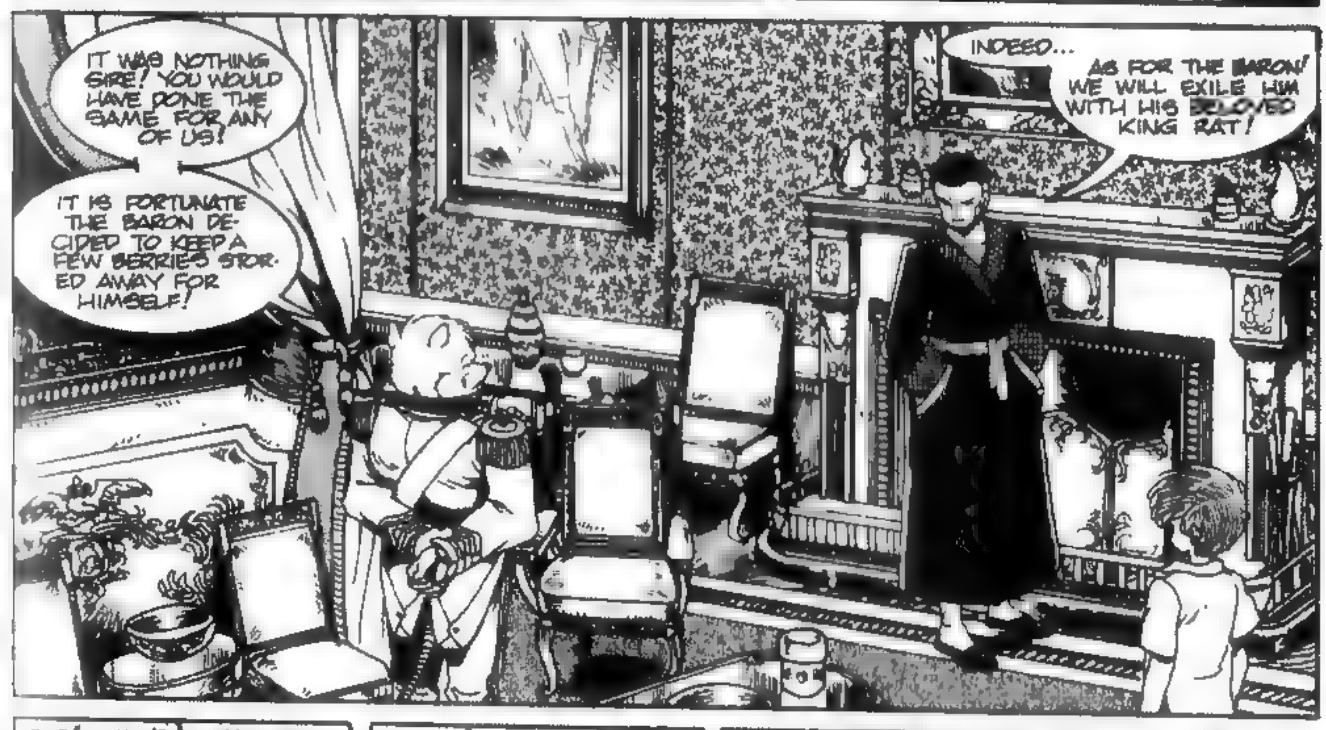

KA-LLAK!

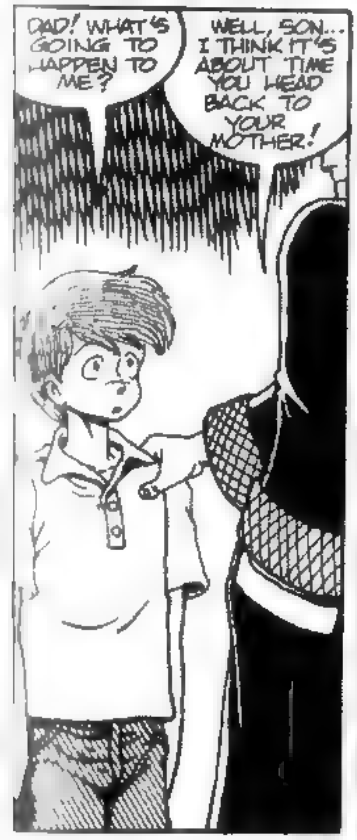
AAAHHHH!!!
HIEEE!
MASH!!
29

ICHI?
.....
RE
JEREMY...
PLEASE TELL ME THE NIGHTMARE IS OVER..
RE
IT IS ICHI. IT'S OVER.
POOR THINGS...
JEREMY...

LATER THAT DAY IN THE IMPERIAL PALACE...

IN MOMENTS LIKE THESE... I FIND VERY LITTLE TO SAY, SO I WILL KEEP IT SIMPLE!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU ALL!


IT WAS NOTHING SIRE! YOU WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR ANY OF US!
IT IS FORTUNATE THE BARON DECIDED TO KEEP A FEW BERRIES STORED AWAY FOR HIMSELF!
INDEED...
AS FOR THE BARON! WE WILL EXILE HIM WITH HIS BELOVED KING RAT!


DAD! WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME?
WELL, SON... I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU HEAD BACK TO YOUR MOTHER!

BUT I WANT TO STAY WITH YOU!
I WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU STAY WITH ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, BUT...

CONSIDER YOUR MOTHER.. SHE WILL BE WORRIED. AND YOUR LITTLE BROTHER RICKY NEEDS SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO, IN TIMES OF NEED ... YOU HAVE MANY RESPONSIBILITIES AT HOME. LIKE I HAVE MANY HERE!

SO YOU SEE, SON... IT IS BEST THAT YOU RETURN.

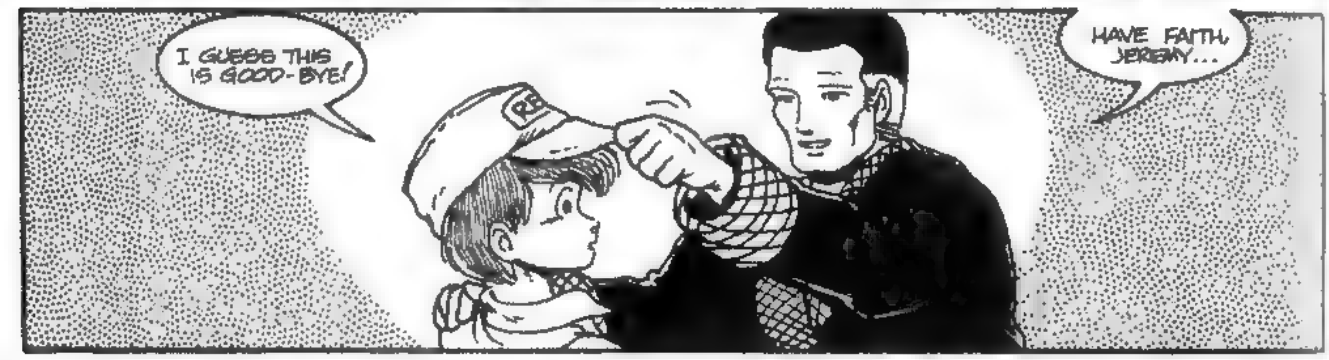
I UNDERSTAND...
IT'S JUST THAT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU...

I WILL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU SON... AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER ME IN YOUR HEART AND SOUL!
WHO KNOWS? SOMEDAY I MAY RETURN...
IN THE MEANTIME WHAT WILL YOU TELL YOUR MOTHER?

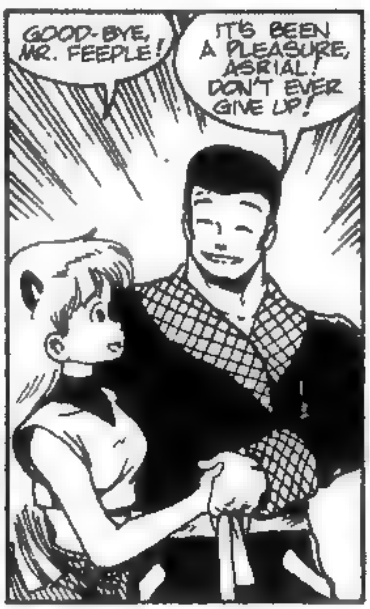
IT'S GOING TO BE HARD...

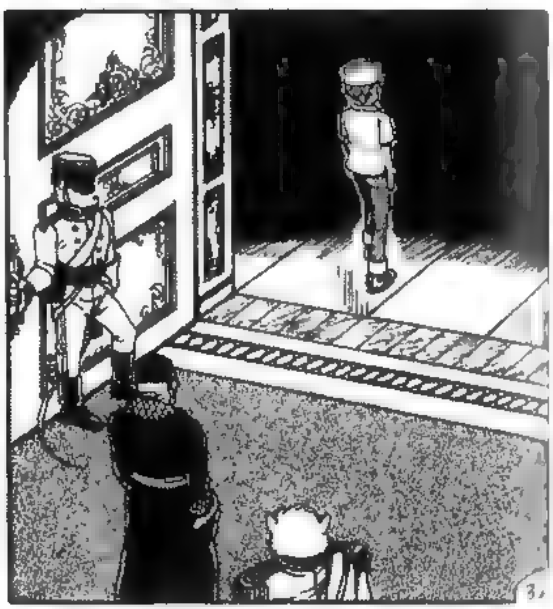
...BUT SHE NEEDS TO BE TOLD THE TRUTH!

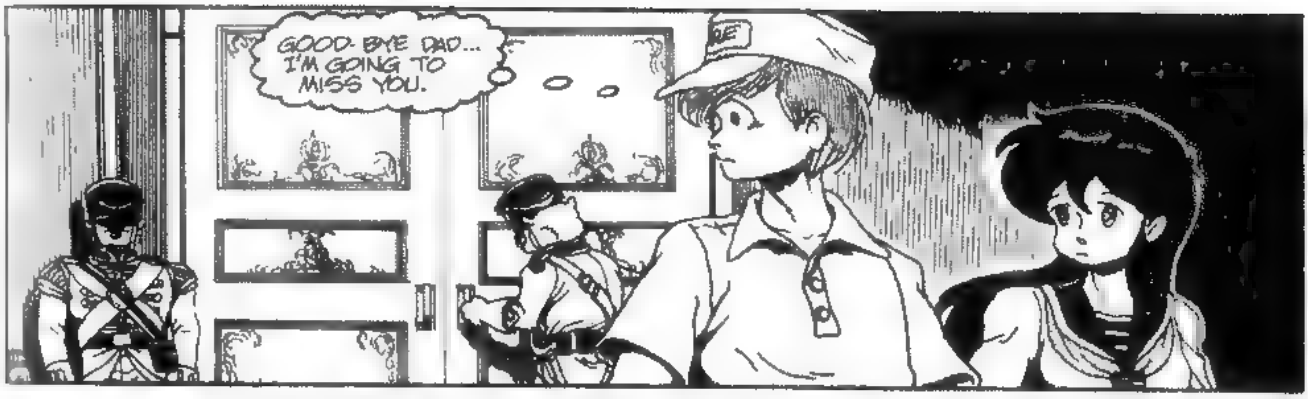
THE TELEPORTER IS READY, SIRE!


I GUESS THIS IS GOOD-BYE!
HAVE FAITH, JEREMY...

BYE, UNCLE!
TAKE CARE OF HIM, ICHI!
I WILL, UNCLE!


GOOD-BYE, MR. FEEPLE!
IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE, ASRIAL! DON'T EVER GIVE UP!



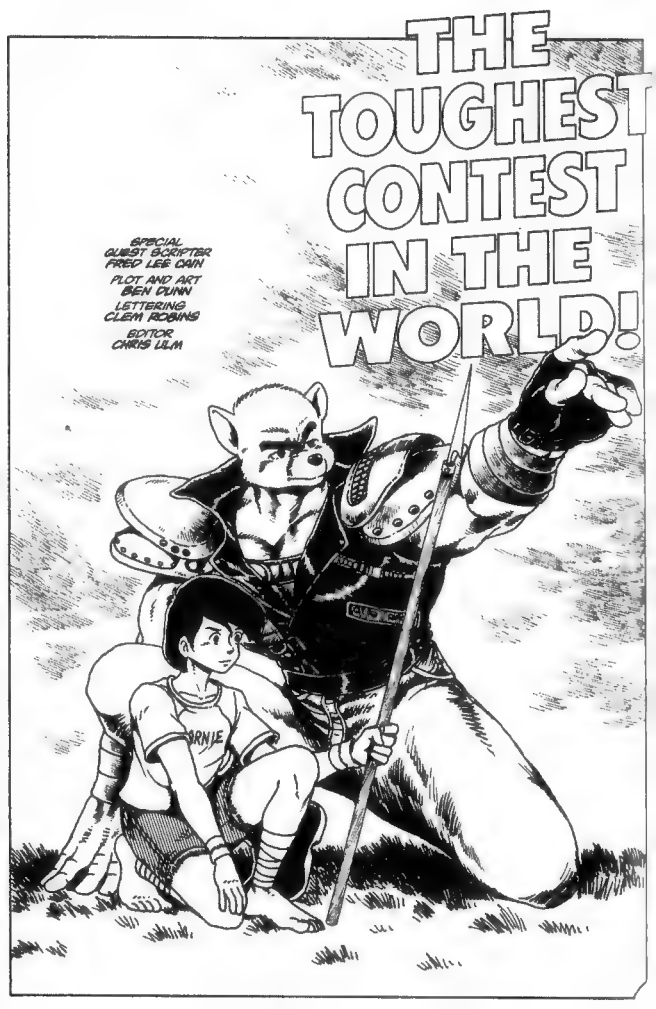

GOOD-BYE DAD... I'M GOING TO MISS YOU.

RE

RE

YOU ARE VERY LUCKY TO HAVE A SON LIKE THAT, SIRE!
I AM PROUD OF HIM, AS ANY FATHER SHOULD BE OF HIS SON! I JUST WISH I WAS THERE FOR HIM ALL THE TIME!
IN A WAY, HE REMINDS ME OF MY OWN STILTED YOUTH

BE GOOD, JEREMY. TAKE CARE OF OUR FAMILY...
END


THE TOUGHEST CONTEST IN THE WORLD!
SPECIAL GUEST SCRIPTER FRED LEE DAIN
PLOT AND ART BEN DUNN
LETTERING CLEM ROBINS
EDITOR CHRIS ULM
ARNIE

NOW SHOWING
MIGHTY
TINY
BIJOU
NOW SHOWING

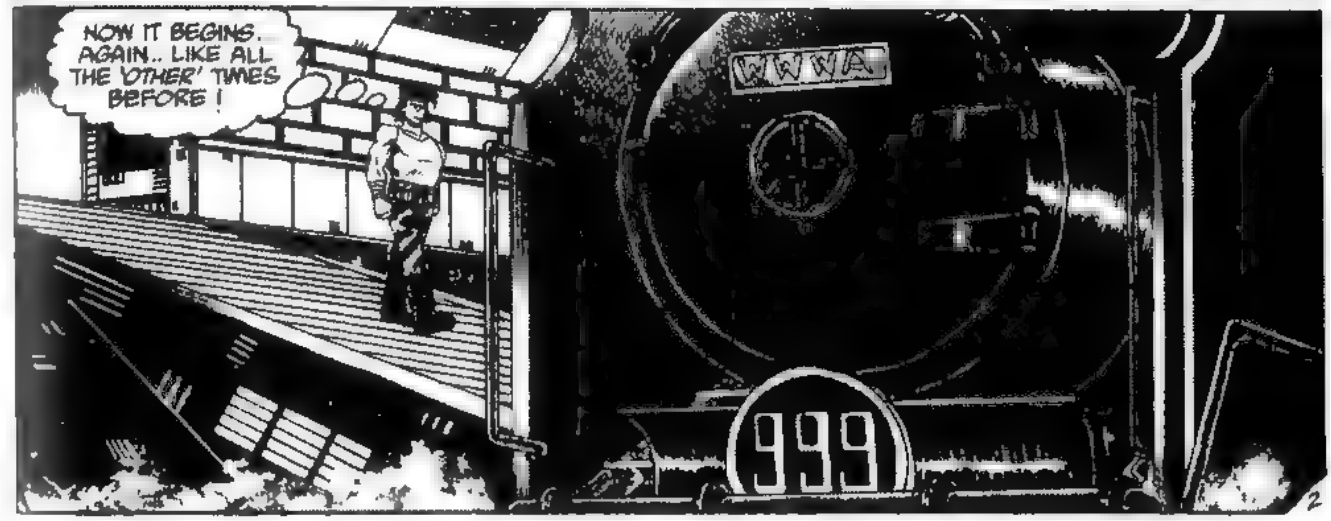
TODAY'S TH' DAY... IT SHOULD HAPPEN SOMETIME SOON NOW.
PSST...ARNIE IT'S TIME!

DAT WAS QUICK.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THAT WHICH MUST NOW 'FOLLOW', ARNIE?
YUH!.. I GUESS ...READY OR NOT..IT'S TOO LATE T'WORRY NOW!

THEN ENTER! O BOLD CHAMPION, AND PREPARE FOR THAT WHICH NOW AWAITS YOU!

:GRUNT:


NOW IT BEGINS... AGAIN.. LIKE ALL THE 'OTHER' TIMES BEFORE!
WWWA
999

HHHMMMM
AH, HERE WE ARE! THANK GOODNESS!
FOR AWHILE THERE I THOUGHT THAT FOUR-DIMENSIONAL TRAFFIC-JAM MIGHT HAVE DELAYED US.
MISS CELANDE...
I HOPE WE DIDN'T KEEP YOU WAITING LONG, ARNIE.. WE ALMOST GOT CAUGHT IN A FENDER-BENDER WITH A BUNCH OF TEENAGE DRIVERS FROM THE 30TH CENTURY!
ANYWAYS...FOR THIS PARTICULAR CONTEST, EACH CONTENDING TEAM IS REQUIRED TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER FROM A PAST TIME-ZONE WITH THE OPTION OF HAVING THREE SUCH MEMBERS...
HOWEVER! THE RULES ARE THAT MEMBERS FROM BOTH OPPOSING TEAMS MUST DRAW THE MEMBERS SO CHOSEN, FROM THE SAME TIME PERIOD!
THE OPPOSING TEAM HAS ALREADY SELECTED THEIR MAXIMUM OF THREE FROM A TIME-ERA.
FOR REASONS OF MY OWN, PARTLY BECAUSE THAT TIME "NEEDED" THE AID OF AS MANY OF THAT TIME'S HEROES AS POSSIBLE, I OPTED TO CHOOSE ONLY ONE FOR "OUR" TEAM!
HOWEVER, I HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN OUR FELLOW TEAM MEMBER, BECAUSE IN A TIME WHEN EVERYTHING LOOKED DARK AND HOPELESS FOR COMMON, ORDINARY, DECENT, LAW-ABIDING PEOPLE HE SHOWED THAT NONE OF US ARE HELPLESS...AND THAT NO EVIL IS SO STRONG, THAT IT CAN LAST FOREVER!
ARNIE. FROM THE YEAR 1937, MAY I HAVE THE HONOR AND PRIVILEGE OF INTRODUCING ONE OF THE BOLD AND RESOURCEFUL AMERICAN FREELANCE HEROES OF THAT ERA..
REECE CHAMBERS...
THE TWILIGHT AVENGER
SHUCKS...I WAS JUST AVAILABLE!

GLAD TO KNOW YOU, ARNIE! MITA'S TOLD ME ABOUT YOU! IT'LL BE GREAT TO BE AT YOUR SIDE IN THIS CONTEST!

MY, YOU ARE A BIG ONE

DA PLEASURE IS ALL MINE, REECE!

WELL, IF YOU BOYS ARE READY, YOU BETTER GET STARTED YOU STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO, AND I KNOW YOU'LL BOTH WANT SOME TIME TO GET ACQUAINTED AND PREPARE FOR THE UPCOMING MATCH!

AREN'T YOU COMING WITH US, MS C?

NO, BOYS! I'M NOT ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN 'THIS' CONTEST! I'M MERELY ONE OF THE COACHES FOR THE 'GOOD' SIDE'S TEAM!

FROM HERE ON, YOU AND THE OTHER HEROES WILL HAVE TO CARRY THE BALL IN THIS GAME BUT I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOU. JUST DO YOUR VERY BEST, AND DON'T WORRY, IT'LL BE ENOUGH!

YOU CAN COUNT ON US, MISS CELANDE

WELCOME ABOARD, ARNIE! I'M GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT. THE CONTEST LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE HARDER THAN USUAL.

SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

BRIDGE TO ENGINE ROOM...WE HAVE INITIATED PICK-UP!

ALL HANDS PREPARE FOR FOLD AS SOON AS WE GET THE NAVIGATION COORDINATES...

HHHHSSS!!
REE CHUK!
OH, BOYS! REMEMBER ~ 'HOPE' WILL SERVE YOU BEST IF YOU CAN KEEP IT, EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE IT!
WE'LL REMEMBER, MS. C.!
?!
EXCUSE ME? MAYBE I'M A LITTLE DENSE, BUT DID YOU GET THAT, ARNIE?
YEAH. SHE MEANT ..'AS LONG AS YA NEVER GIVE UP IT HELPS IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA WIN .. BUT IT'S NOT NECESSARY!"
WELL, WHY DIDN'T SHE SAY SO?
PASSENGERS WILL PLEASE FASTEN THEIR SEAT-BELTS!
TAKE OFF!!
KLAKITY-KLAK! KLAK!
999
ATTENTION ALL TRACKING STATIONS! ARNIE AND TWILIGHT AVENGER HAVE DEPARTED TO THE RENDEZVOUS POINT!

*SEE IAGIE NO. 3 1/2

SOCK IT TO 'EM, BIG BROTHER!
YAY! WE CAN'T LOSE!
THANKS, KID
ARNIE
EY! ARNIE KID. WE GOT US A GREAT TEAM.
DEY'RE GOOD GUYS, ALL. BUT WHAT I TELLS YA—MUSCLE ALONE IS NOT WHUT FIGHTS IS MADE OF..
AN' WINNIN' AIN'T ALWAYS DA SAME THING AS NOT LOSIN'!
IF A GUY GOES DOWN PER DE 'FULL COUNT' WITHOUT QUITTIN', HE MAY GET CLOBBERED..
BUT IF HE REFUSES TA 'GIVE UP'.. DEN WHEN IT'S ALL OVER, NOBODY KIN DO ANY MORE TO HIM! IN HIS MIND..DE FIGHT WASN'T OVER! AN' HE STILL HADN'T LOST! HE STILL REFUSED T'THINK HE WUZ BEAT!
POWER?!! HUNH!
AN IRON FIST WITH A GLASS JAW IS A POOR COMBINATION
ONCE'T I FOUGHT A GUY WHO COULD PUNCH A HOLE IN A BRICK WALL, BUT BRICK WALLS DON'T MOVE!!
NEVER LAID A GLOVE ON ME!
BUT WHY DO THE BAD GUYS FIGHT, BIG BROTHER?
BECUZ...DEY WANT IT ALL! DEY THINK DEY CAN'T WIN FAIR! DEY'RE SCARED! DEY WANNA FEEL BIG. BUT DEY THINK TH' ONLY WAY DEY KIN DO THAT IS BY MAKIN' OTHERS FEEL LITTLER DEN 'THEY FEEL!!"
ARNIE

"IT WAS THEN WHEN I LEARNED WHAT MY BROTHER MEANT, WHEN HE TALKED ABOUT...THE FOES BEIN' 'POWER HITTERS'!"
"THE VILLAINS HAD BROUGHT OUT THEIR MAIN CONTENDER AN' WAS PLAYIN' 'SUDDEN DEATH' WITH NO OVERTIME!"
"A' COURSE, OUR SIDE DIDN'T HAVE NOTHIN' IN THEIR LEAGUE, AN' I THOUGHT WE WUZ GONNA LOSE FOR SURE!
"COURSE, I WAS LITTLE AND STUPID THEN .."
ARNIE

WAK!
GAH!
"OUR SIDE DIDN'T LACK COURAGE OR POWER! THE CHAMPIONS REPRESENTING GOOD WERE ALL PROFESSIONALS! SEASONED VETERANS OF MANY A HARD FOUGHT AND WON BATTLE!
"FEAR WASN'T A WORD THEY KNEW.
"BUT WITH MY BIG BROTHER AND DOGGIE ON THE ROPES ...THINGS REALLY LOOKED BAD...
"IT WAS GOING TO TAKE MORE THAN COURAGE TO WIN."

SMAK!
GIVE UP, BIG BROTHER! PLEASE! DON'T DIE!! CALL QUITS!!
ARNIE
"I WUZ READY TO THROW IN THE TOWEL...BUT NOT MY BROTHER...HE SAID LATER THAT HEARIN' ME WORRIED, GAVE HIM THE 'PUSH' HE NEEDED.
UNNH
OKAY, HOTSHOT! NOW YUH GONNA GET YOURS!
"THE FIGHT THAT FOLLOWED...CHANGED A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF THE ISLAND'S LANDSCAPE!
"HE WUZ NICE LIKE THAT
NOBODY SCARES MY LITTLE BRUDDER, AN' GETS AWAY WITH IT!

"BUT IT STILL LOOKED ROUGH, WHEN..."
DOGGIE...LOOK, UP DERE ON TH'WALL BEHIND HIM!
I SEE IT.
THAT CARVED STONE SPUR
DEM RUNES SAY IF DE COLUMN IS LOWERED, IT'LL OPEN D'GATE TO 'THE WELL OF AEONS'.
AN' DAT CREEP IS STANDIN' RIGHT UNDER IT!
D'YOU THINK T'GETHUH WE COULD REACH IT?
IF YOU GIVE ME A BOOST THAT FIREBUG'LL BE HISTORY!
YOU GOT IT!
LET'S GO GET HIM!!
WUMP
NO!

GGGGGRRRRRR...
CRIK!
CRAK!
TWIST!
!
KURR-
RRAR?!
GGAAHHHH!!
FLUSH!

:PHEW:
IT'S OVER...

NOT QUITE

WE VILLAINS HATE TO LOSE!

I'D BACK OFF IF I WERE YOU

WE WON FAIR.. YOU KNOW THE RULES

C'MON, DOC! THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT TIME!
BAH! YOU HAVE NOT SEEN THE LAST OF US!
EXIT

BIG BROTHER! BIG BROTHER!
MMM...?

PLEASE GET WELL, BIG BROTHER! I'M SORRY I CHICKENED OUT ON YOU!
'EY! YOU DID OKAY! T' TELL D' TRUTH, FER A WHILE I FELT KINDA SCARED, TOO!
JUST REMEMBER, ARNIE, THEY AIN'T NOTHIN' WRONG IN BEIN' BEAT IF YOU DONE YOUR BEST AN' TRIED T' FIGHT FAIR!
LOSIN' AIN'T BEIN' BEAT! LOSIN' IS THINKIN' YOU'RE BEAT!
UHHHH
BIG BROTHER!
HIS INJURIES ARE GRAVE
DO SOMETHING, DOGGIE!
I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP HIM... I KNOW A STRANGE OLD MAN IN THE HIMALAYAS THAT MIGHT JUST DO THE TRICK...
BUT ARNIE, IT MAY TAKE YEARS FOR HIM TO FULLY RECOVER... ARE YOU PREPARED TO BE ALL ALONE?
MY LIFE ISN'T AS IMPORTANT AS MY BROTHER'S...
DO WHATEVER YOU CAN TO SAVE HIM!
YOU ARE A BRAVE BOY, ARNIE... YOUR BROTHER WOULD BE PROUD IF HE COULD HEAR THOSE WORDS.
ARNIE THE FIRST LITTLE BOY I BELONGED TO... JEREMY. IF YOU EVER SEE HIM ..WILL YOU BE HIS FRIEND LIKE YOU WERE MINE?
I PROMISE, DOGGIE.
"THEY BOTH LEFT... AND I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM SINCE.
"A COUPLE OF DAYS PASSED ON THE ISLAND WHILE THE REST OF THE HEROES WERE DECIDING WHAT TO DO WITH ME...
"NOW, BEING AN ORPHAN, THEY HAD TO APPOINT A LEGAL GUARDIAN...
"IT WAS A GOOD CHOICE.
"THEN IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE THE ISLAND AND GO TO MY NEW HOME IN GUAGMIRE."
ARNIE

KLAKITY-KLAK-KLAK!
GF 999
999
IN QUAGMIRE, I MET DOGGIE'S PREVIOUS OWNER, JEREMY FEEPLE..
SOMETIMES IT AIN'T EASY, BUT I'VE TRIED TO BE THE BEST PERSON I COULD BE.
I THINK YOU'VE SUCCEEDED, ARNIE.
ANYWAYS. ENOUGH ABOUT ME! I PROBABLY BEEN BORIN' Y'ANYWAY!
WHAT ABOUT YOU? MS. CELANDE WOULDN'T PICK JUST ANYBODY FOR OUR TEAM 'LESS HE WAS THE BEST! WHAT KIND OF VILLAINS HAVE YOU FOUGHT?
OH. GANGSTERS, ROBBERS, SPIES...
Hmmm WELL, YOU'VE HAD EXPERIENCE. WHAT SORT OF POWERS DO YOU USE WHEN YOU'RE IN COMBAT?
I REALLY DON'T HAVE 'POWERS' DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER HUMAN BEING..LIKE YOU, I MERELY WORKED HARD TO DEVELOP THOSE ABILITIES I ALREADY HAD.
OF COURSE I WOULD TRY TO AVOID A FIGHT IF I COULD...
IN REAL LIFE, THOUGH.. I'M JUST A COLLEGE STUDENT WORKING TO BE A CHEMICAL ENGINEER...
SEEMS LIKE YOU WERE LEADIN' A PRETTY AVERAGE LIFE
WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A CRIMEFIGHTER?

THINGS WERE TOUGH BACK THEN.. WE WERE STILL SUFFERING FROM A 'GREAT DEPRESSION' IN THOSE DAYS...EVERYTHING WAS SCARCE, EMOTIONS WERE HIGH. BUT DESPITE IT ALL, PEOPLE STILL HELPED EACH OTHER!

OF COURSE, MY PLANS WERE TO GRADUATE, GET A JOB, AND GET MARRIED TO MY SWEETHEART, DOLORES

...NOT TO FIGHT CRIME!

"DOLORES' FATHER IS MILTON HERTH .THE HEAD OF OUR COLLEGE'S SCIENCE DEPARTMENT AND A MAN OF BRILLIANCE AND VERY HIGH PRINCIPLES.

"I DIDN'T THINK OF DR HEARTH AS JUST A TEACHER OR A FATHER-IN-LAW-TO-BE, BUT AS A GOOD FRIEND! SOMEONE I COULD TRUST! WHO'D ALWAYS BE READY TO GIVE ME GOOD ADVICE...

"THOSE WERE THE GOOD DAYS. THE DAYS FILLED WITH HOPE AND PROMISE DESPITE THE HARDSHIPS...

"UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE THOSE WHO DON'T CARE WHO GETS STEPPED ON AS LONG AS THEY GET WHAT THEY WANT THOSE THAT HOLD LITTLE VALUE FOR HUMAN LIFE...

"I'D ALWAYS KNOWN OF THE PROBLEM, BUT DIDN'T SEE WHAT I COULD DO TO HELP...

"UNTIL ONE DAY IT BECAME A PERSONAL PROBLEM.

"DURING A STREET SHOOT-OUT BETWEEN MEMBERS OF TWO RIVAL GANGS, DOLORES WAS HIT BY ONE OF THEM...

"THE RESULTING INJURIES PUT HER IN A COMA...*

"I VOWED THAT THE CROOKS WOULD PAY FOR THEIR CRIMES!

"WITH DR HERTH'S HELP WE SET UPON THE TASK. USING OUR KNOWLEDGE, WE CREATED DEVICES AND WEAPONS THAT WOULD GIVE ME AN ADVANTAGE WITHOUT STOOPING TO THE LEVEL OF THE CRIMINALS THEMSELVES

"FROM DESPAIR CAME MY ALTER-EGO...

THE TWILIGHT AVENGER

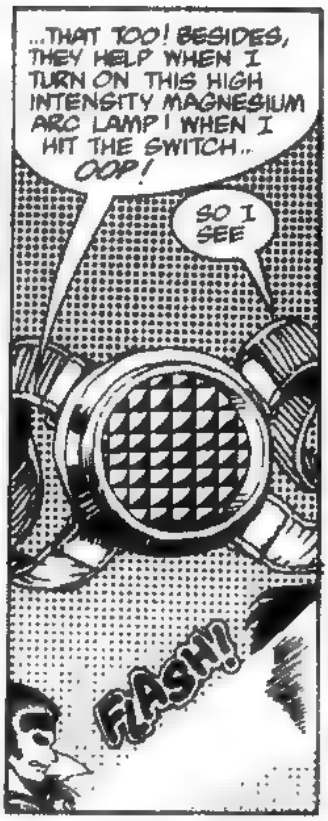
AS A KID, I ENJOYED STORIES OF HEROES SUCH AS "THE SCARECROW O ROMANY MARSH" AND "THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW" WITH BROM BONES DISGUISED AS THE "HEADLESS HORSEMAN"

BOTH DR. HERTH AND I FIGURED IF I WORE A MASK, IT'D NOT ONLY PROTECT US, BUT ANYBODY CLOSE TO US

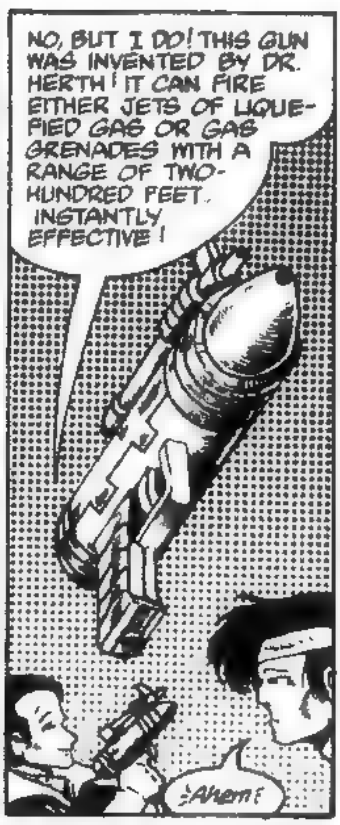
WE ALSO RIGGED A MINATURE MICROPHONE TO DISGUISE MY VOICE...IT'S COME IN HANDY AT TIMES

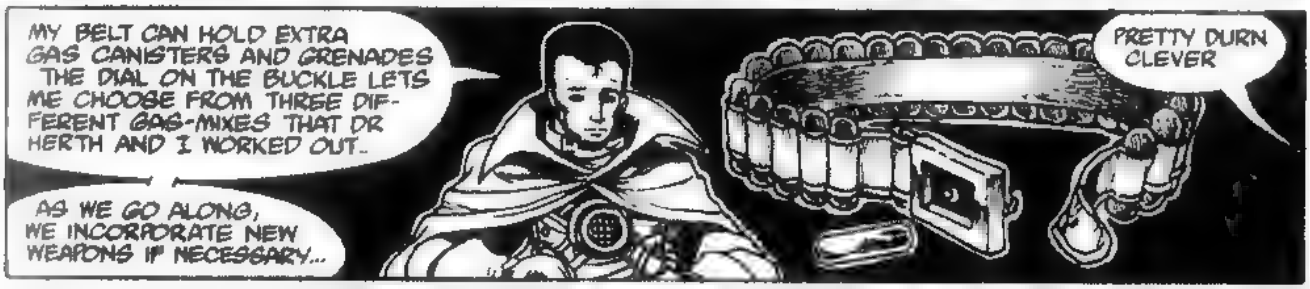
*SEE TWILIGHT AVENGER NO. 1-7

THE GOGGLES NOT ONLY HIDE MY EYES, THEY ALSO PROVIDE PROTECTION.
BULLET PROOF GLASS?


...THAT TOO! BESIDES, THEY HELP WHEN I TURN ON THIS HIGH INTENSITY MAGNESIUM ARC LAMP! WHEN I HIT THE SWITCH.. OOP!
SO I SEE
FLASH!

MY MASK HAS A BUILT-IN GAS MASK TO PROTECT ME FROM FUMES
DO THE CROOKS USE A LOT OF GAS?


NO, BUT I DO! THIS GUN WAS INVENTED BY DR. HERTH! IT CAN FIRE EITHER JETS OF LIQUEFIED GAS OR GAS GRENADES WITH A RANGE OF TWO-HUNDRED FEET. INSTANTLY EFFECTIVE!
Ahem!


MY BELT CAN HOLD EXTRA GAS CANISTERS AND GRENADES THE DIAL ON THE BUCKLE LETS ME CHOOSE FROM THREE DIFFERENT GAS-MIXES THAT DR HERTH AND I WORKED OUT..
PRETTY DURN CLEVER
AS WE GO ALONG, WE INCORPORATE NEW WEAPONS IF NECESSARY...

I GUESS OUR INVENTIONS SEEM KIND OF PRIMITIVE BY YOUR STANDARDS. IN A WAY I FEEL A LITTLE AWKWARD DESCRIBING THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE IN OUR SOCIETY...
YOU FOLKS HERE IN THE FUTURE PROBABLY DON'T HAVE PROBLEMS LIKE OURS.

YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED..
SO TELL ME, DID YA REMAIN THE TWILIGHT AVENGER DURING WORLD WAR TWO?

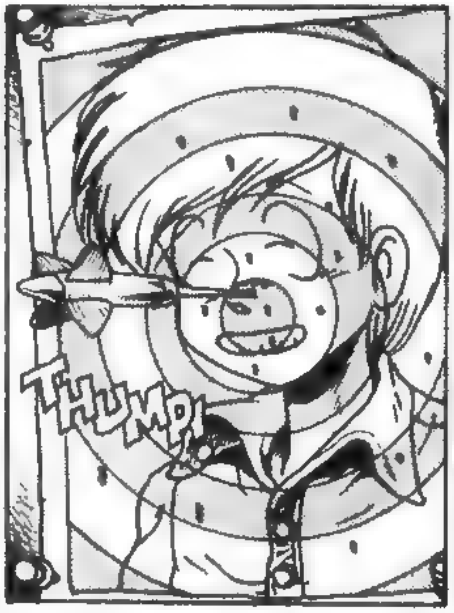
WORLD WAR TWO?!!
OOPSIE

ARNIE.. I'D LIKE TO HAVE A 'LITTLE TALK' WITH YOU ABOUT ANYTHING YOU CAN RECALL FROM RECENT HISTORY..

HOKKAIDO, JAPAN...
WITH YOUR PERMISSION, SIR, I WILL NOW DEPART... I UNDERSTAND THE OTHER CHAMPIONS ARE ON THE WAY
OF COURSE, KUMA!
THANK YOU.
WUP! WUP!
WUP!
GOOD LUCK, KUMA! YOU FIGHT NOT ONLY FOR THE HONOR OF THE ICHINOHEI CLAN, BUT FOR ALL THAT IS GOOD!
WUP! WUP! WUP!
RNC
MASTER RIVALSAN...IT WAS AS YOU PREDICTED. KUMA IS ON HIS WAY TO THE CONTEST!

BLAST IT FATHER! MUST LENDO GET TO DO EVERYTHING?
SILENCE, TETSUO ...I HAVE DECIDED!
R.N.C

COMMUNICATIONS! OPEN OUR SATELLITE COM-LINK TO THE UNITED STATES!
YES, SIR!


THUMP!

SIR, SIR!
WHAT IS IT, LACKEY?

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE COMING IN FROM R.N.C HEADQUARTERS!
Hmmmm.. PROBABLY JUST WANTS OUR LATEST PRODUCT FIGURES!

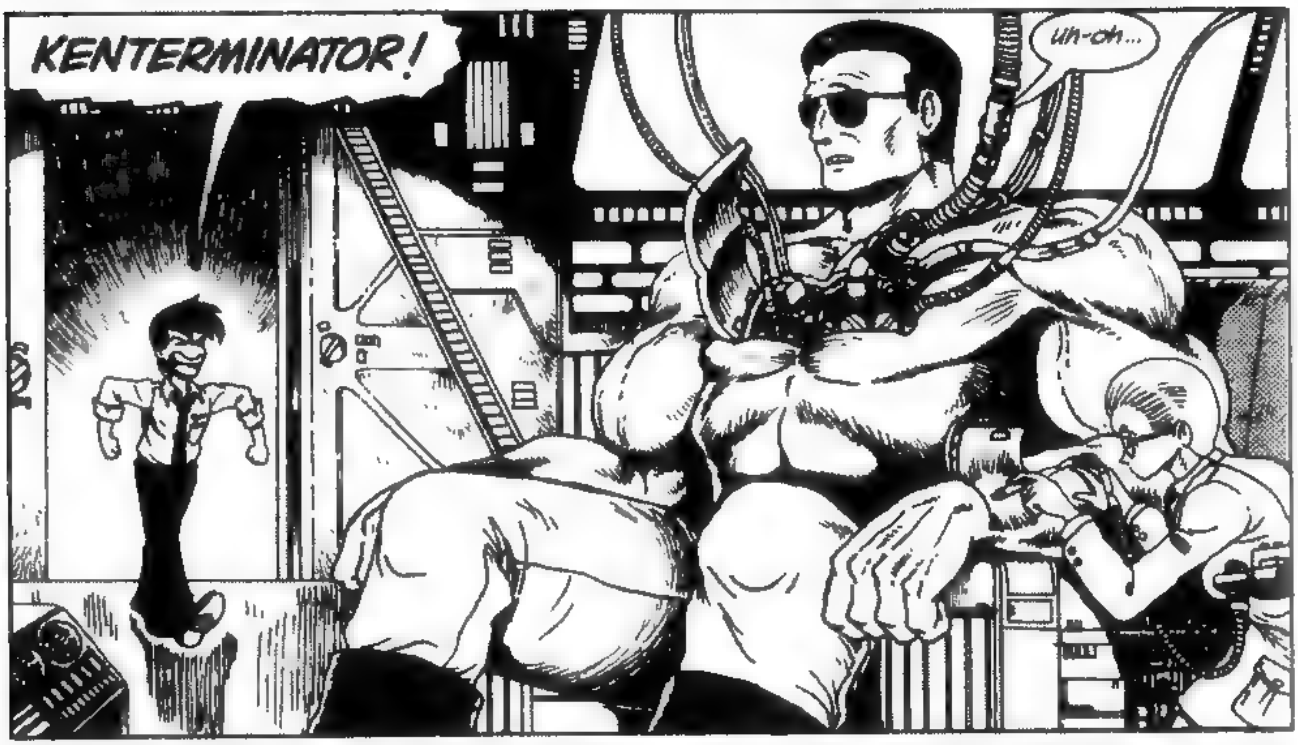
LENDO!
FATHER!
LISTEN CAREFULLY, LENDO, I WANT OUR FAMILY TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE GREAT CONTEST...

REST ASSURED, FATHER, I SHALL BE HONORED TO REPRESENT THE GREAT RIVALSAN FAMILY!
R.N.C
IT'S NOT YOU I WANT, IDIOT-SON-OF-MINE!

SHATTER!
NOT ME?
THEN WHO?

I WANT THAT BIG, CYBORG GUY WHO'S-ITS-FACE...

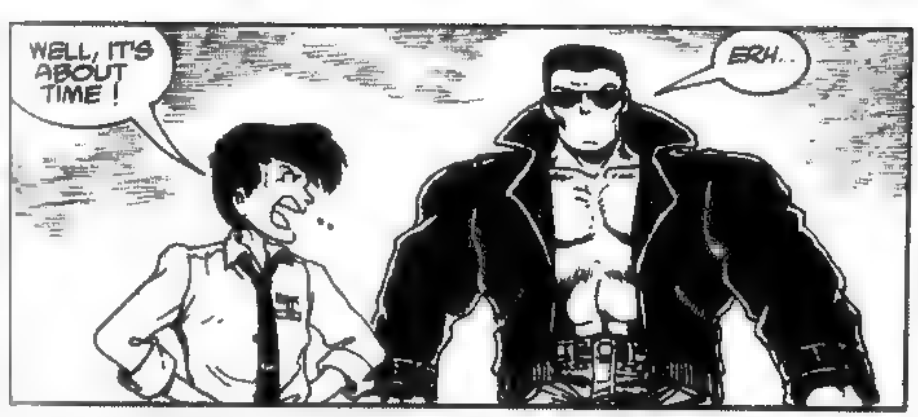
BOOM!
HMM?


KENTERMINATOR!
uh-oh...

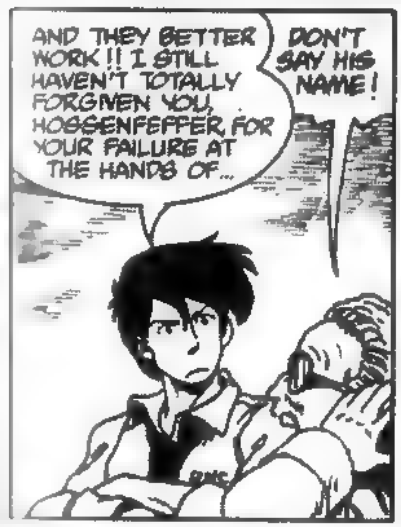
KENTERMINATOR! MY FATHER HAS DECIDED THAT, FOR THE HONOR AND GLORY OF THE CLAN, YOU WILL TAKE PART AS ONE OF THE 'CHAMPIONS OF GOOD' IN THE 'GREAT CONTEST!'
SO DON'T DISAPPOINT ME!
uhhh...YES, SIR! I'LL DO MY BEST!

SEE THAT YOU DO... I'LL ARRANGE FOR YOUR TRANSPORT!

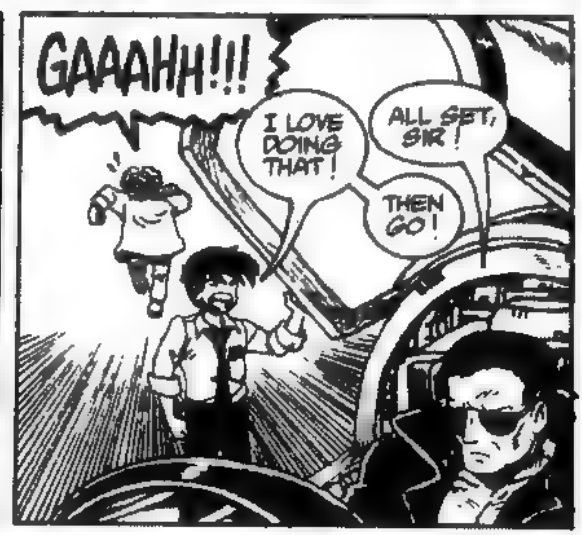
SAY...WHAT IS THIS GREAT CONTEST, ANYWAYS?
DON'T ASK ME! I JUST WORK HERE!


WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME!
ERH...

IT TOOK AWHILE TO INSTALL THE NEW ATTACHMENTS!


AND THEY BETTER WORK!! I STILL HAVEN'T TOTALLY FORGIVEN YOU, HOSSENFEFFER, FOR YOUR FAILURE AT THE HANDS OF...
DON'T SAY HIS NAME!

YOU MEAN... S-S-S-S-TEAMHEAD?


GAAAHH!!!
I LOVE DOING THAT!
ALL SET, SIR!
THEN GO!

VVRREEEEL

THAT SHOULD BE ME UP THERE, BLAST IT!

AND SO I GO ON YET ANOTHER MISSION...SIGH: WHEN WILL IT END?
R.N.C.
ENGAGING MAIN THRUSTERS!

LEAVE!!

THE LAST OF THE CONTESTANTS HAVE ARRIVED
VERY GOOD.. PLEASE SEE TO THEM.

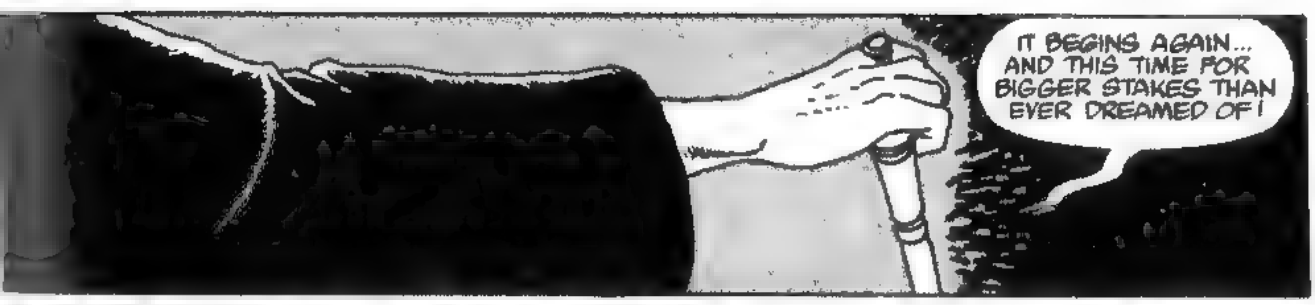
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL ISLAND...
YEAH...TRANSFERRING US FROM TRAIN TO PLANE, THEN TO BOAT, SURE KEEPS THE LOCATION A SECRET...

WELL LOOK WHO'S HERE! HOW'S IT GOING, KEN?
FINE
Whew! THEY GET BIG IN THIS ERA!

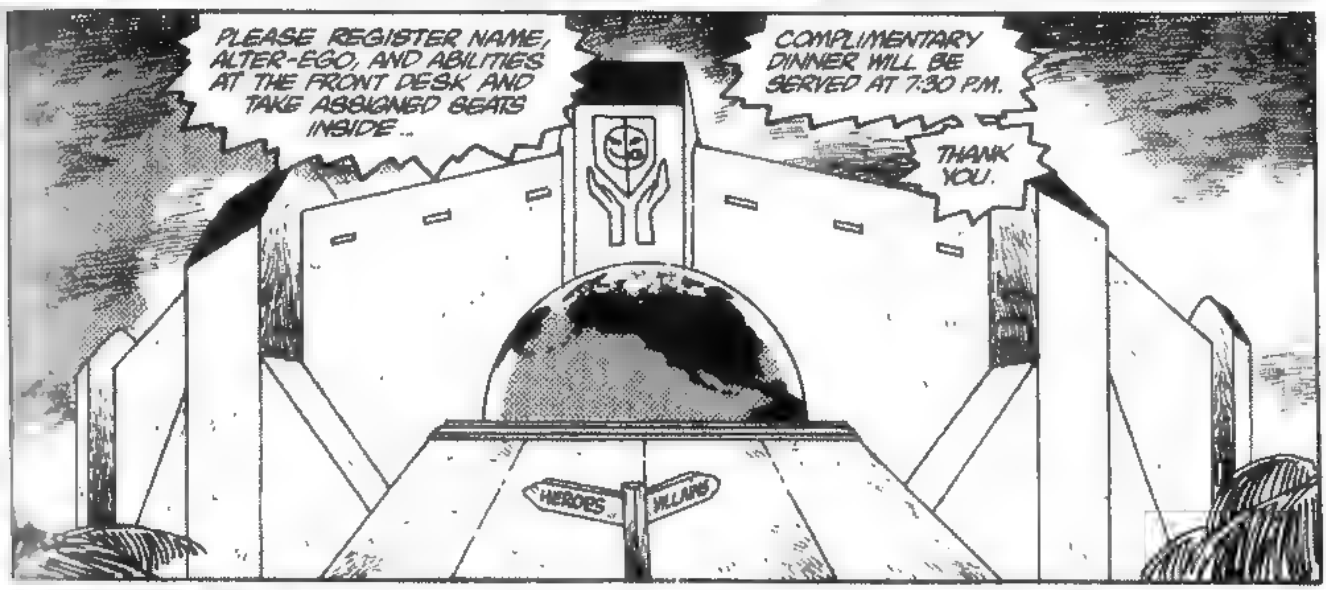
SO THIS CONTEST IS HELD EVERY FIVE YEARS TO SEE IF GOOD OR EVIL WILL HAVE THE ADVANTAGE ON EARTH!
Uh-huh! EVER SINCE ANCIENT TIMES!
SO WHERE ARE OUR OPPONENTS?

THEY ARE ALREADY HERE!
WHO?
I AM NIGHT-STALKER!
MY CARD.

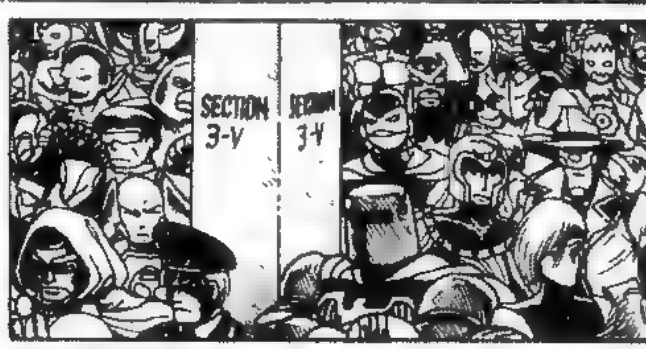
ATTENTION ALL CONTESTANTS! PLEASE FOLLOW THE RED ARROWS AND GO TO THE CENTRAL PAVILLION!

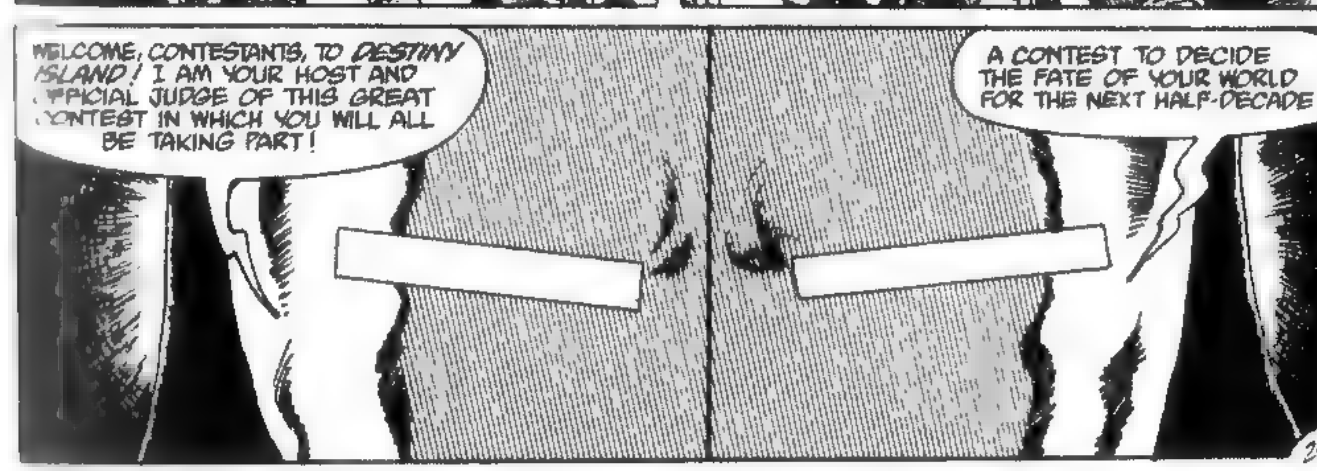

IT BEGINS AGAIN... AND THIS TIME FOR BIGGER STAKES THAN EVER DREAMED OF!

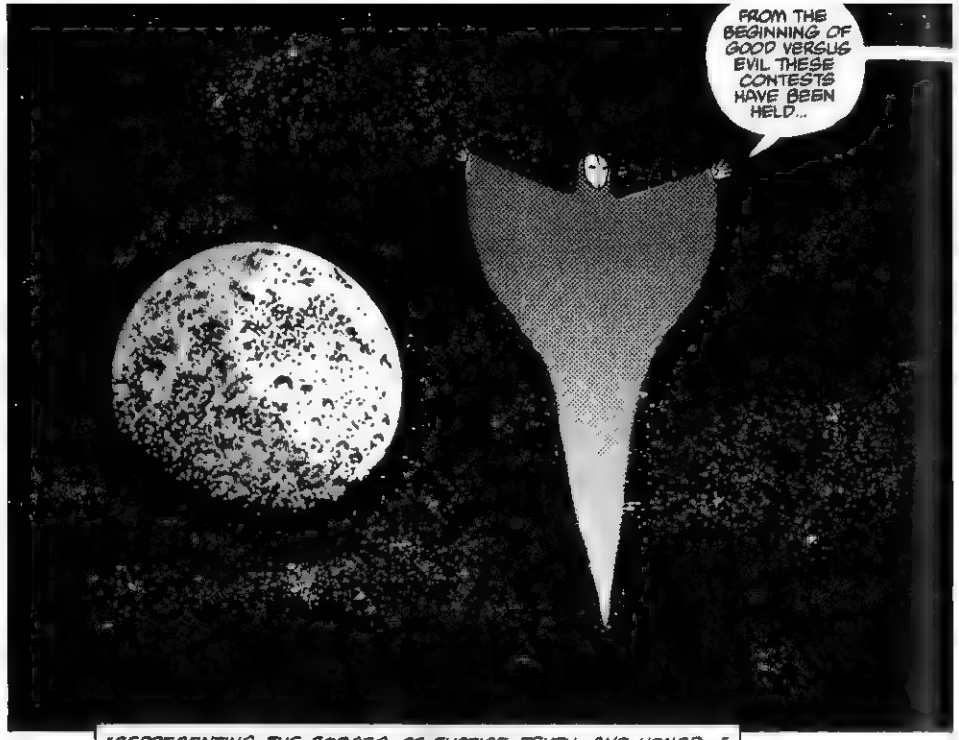
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME FOR THIS CONTEST...
SAME HERE.


PLEASE REGISTER NAME, ALTER-EGO, AND ABILITIES AT THE FRONT DESK AND TAKE ASSIGNED SEATS INSIDE...
COMPLIMENTARY DINNER WILL BE SERVED AT 7:30 P.M.
THANK YOU.
HEROES
VILLAINS

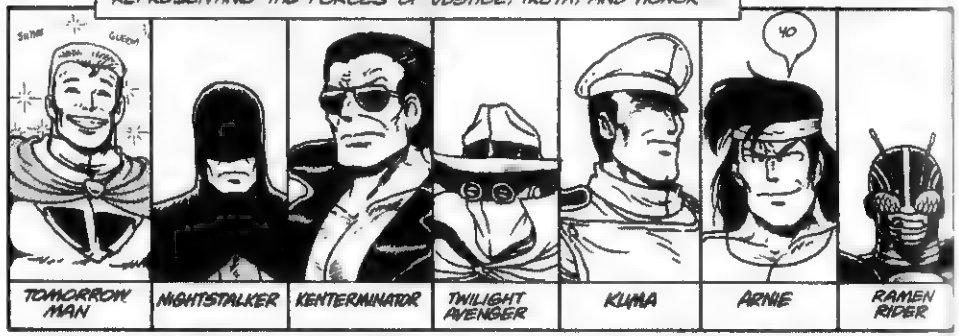
SECTION 3-H
SECTION 3-H


SECTION 3-V
SECTION 3-V

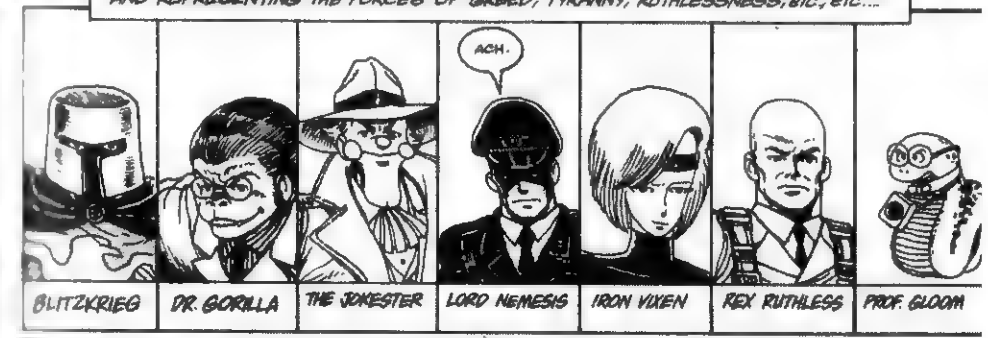

WELCOME, CONTESTANTS, TO DESTINY ISLAND! I AM YOUR HOST AND OFFICIAL JUDGE OF THIS GREAT CONTEST IN WHICH YOU WILL ALL BE TAKING PART!
A CONTEST TO DECIDE THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD FOR THE NEXT HALF-DECADE!

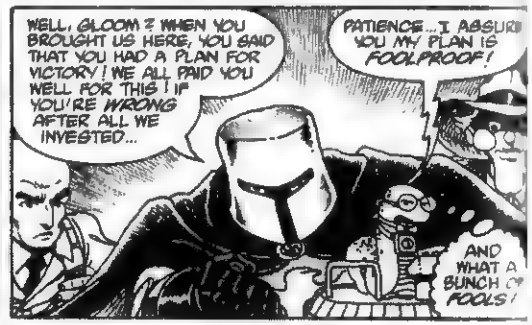


"REPRESENTING THE FORCES OF JUSTICE, TRUTH, AND HONOR"



"AND REPRESENTING THE FORCES OF GREED, TYRANNY, RUTHLESSNESS, etc., etc...."





SPECIAL THANKS TO
JOHN WOOLEY & TERRY TIDWELL
FOR USE OF THE
"TWILIGHT AVENGER"
NINJA
HIGH SCHOOL
FOOD FOR THOUGHT
SPECIAL GUEST SCRIPTER
FRED LEE CAIN
PLOTTED AND DRAWN BY
BEN DUNN
LETTERED BY
DAN NAKROSIS
EDITED BY
CHRIS LILM

FOR THE OPENING OF THE GREAT CONTEST, YOU WILL EACH BE ALLOTTED AN ADVERSARY... THE SELECTION WILL BE TOTALLY BY RANDOM CHANCE, BUT IN EACH CASE *APPROPRIATE*.

CONTESTANTS ARE FREE TO MAKE 'TAG TEAM' TRADE-OFFS OF OPPONENTS IF THEY WISH, SO LONG AS THE ESSENTIAL BALANCE OF AN EQUAL MATCH IS MAINTAINED... ASIDE FROM THAT ANYTHING GOES!

ANY QUESTIONS?

THE FIRST-ROUND ARRANGEMENT NEED NOT BE THOUGHT OF AS IN ANY WAY "RESTRICTING" SHOULD OPPORTUNITY PERMIT...

AHEM.

YES, ARNIE?

SUPPOSIN' YOU SEE A FRIEND DOWN AND OUT AND THE GUY WHO PUT 'IM DOWN FOR A FULL COUNT LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING TO 'OFF' 'IM...

...WOULD IT BE BREAKIN' THE RULES T' GO TO HIS HELP, EVEN IF THERE WUZ ONLY ONE BAD GUY THERE?

A *REASONABLE* QUESTION.

IT IS PERFECTLY PERMISSABLE TO AID A FALLEN TEAM MEMBER SO LONG AS THE BASIC CONFLICT REMAINS ONE-TO-ONE!

YOU CALL THIS A 'FAIR FIGHT' OVERSEER? ALLOWING OUR FOES TO EM- WHAT IS THAT ENGLANDER TERM?...

'DOUBLE-TEAM' US?! *NEIN!!* IF YOU CALL THIS EQUAL TERMS... THEN I SAY THAT WE WIN BY *DEFAULT!!*

SETTLE DOWN, GENERAL. THE SAME GOES FOR YOU, GUYS! IT'S JUST THAT YOU CAN'T PLAY "TWO-TO-ONE" AT THE SAME TIME!

IMPOLENT LUP' FOR *TWO PFENNIGS* I'D...

RESTRAIN YOURSELF, *NEMESIS!* THE LAD IS RIGHT! BESIDES, OUR TIME WILL COME LATER!

COME OVER *HERE* AND SAY THAT, YOU STUFFED SHIRT!

BOY KID... DON'T GET US A LAG ON THE PLAY.

HE'S JUST GROUSIN'... JUST HOT AIR, LET IT PASS!

≡ *YAKESH!* ≡

IF THIS IS TH' WAY WE'RE GOING TO BE STARTING OUT, I WISH I HAD STAYED AT HOME!

THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE THIS *DONE PARTY!*

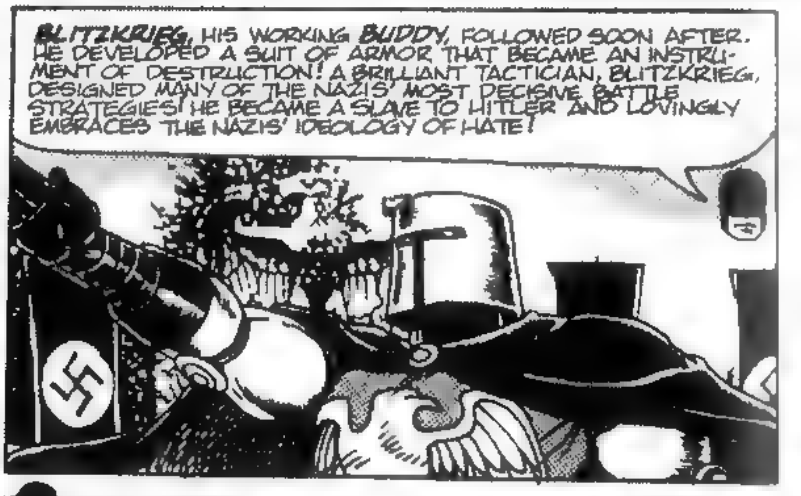
WHY DO YOU THINK WE CALL 'EM 'VILLAINS', KID?

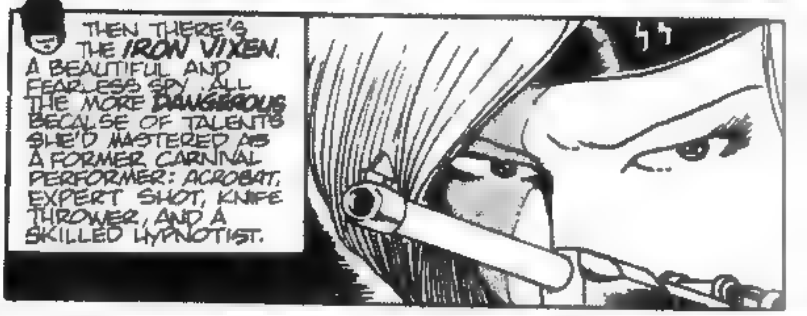
WELL, I DON'T THINK THAT LOUDMOUTH IS GOING TO BE MUCH TROUBLE.
HE LOOKS LIKE A REJECT FROM AN OLD WORLD WAR TWO SERIAL!

THE UNIFORM HE WEARS IS NOT FROM ANY MOVIE, LAD! HE WEARS IT BECAUSE FROM WHERE HE CAME FROM IT MEANT SOMETHING REAL! HE AND TWO OF HIS FRIENDS ROSE HIGH IN THE MIDST OF THE NIGHTMARE THAT WAS HITLER'S REICH!
DON'T LET HIS ANTIQUATED LOOKS FOOL YOU! HE IS A DANGEROUS AND CUNNING ENEMY...

HE'S RIGHT, KIO! ANYBODY WHO'S MADE IT ONTO THEIR TEAM IS NOBODY TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED! YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN, AND THEY'LL BE SWEEPING ALL OF US WITH A BROOM!
NOT TO MENTION WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO EARTH IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS!

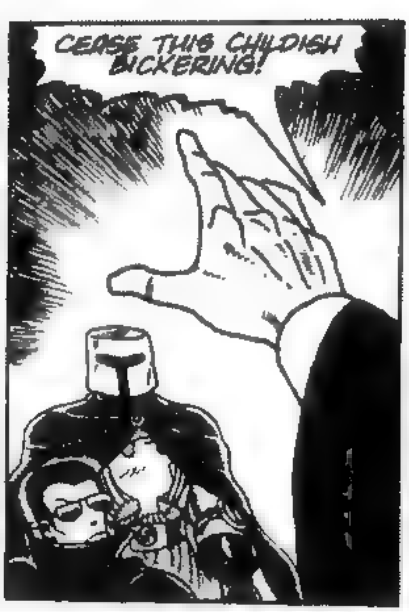
INDEED! LORD NEMESIS WAS CONSIDERED TOO FANATICAL EVEN FOR HITLER'S DREADED "S.S.". GIVEN A SERUM DEVELOPED BY GERMAN SCIENTISTS, HE BECAME THEIR 'SUPER-SOLDIER'. HIS RUTHLESSNESS IS MATCHED ONLY BY HIS TOTAL LACK OF COMPASSION TOWARD OTHERS!


BLITZKRIEG, HIS WORKING BUDDY, FOLLOWED SOON AFTER. HE DEVELOPED A SUIT OF ARMOR THAT BECAME AN INSTRUMENT OF DESTRUCTION! A BRILLIANT TACTICIAN, BLITZKRIEG, DESIGNED MANY OF THE NAZIS' MOST DECISIVE BATTLE STRATEGIES! HE BECAME A SLAVE TO HITLER AND LOVINGLY EMBRACES THE NAZIS' IDEOLOGY OF HATE!

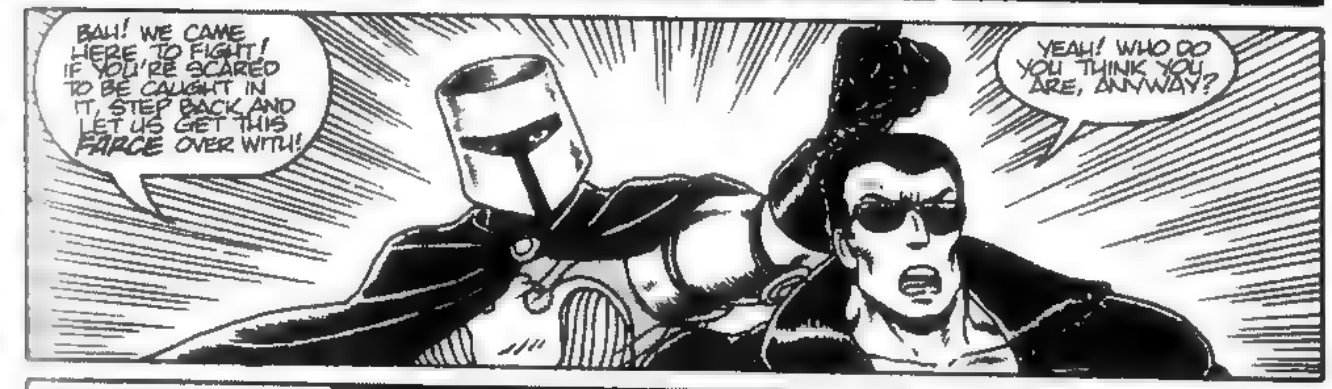

THEN THERE'S THE IRON VIXEN, A BEAUTIFUL AND FEARLESS SPY, ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS BECAUSE OF TALENTS SHE'D MASTERED AS A FORMER CARNIVAL PERFORMER: ACROBAT, EXPERT SHOT, KNIFE THROWER, AND A SKILLED HYPNOTIST.

AS FOR OUR OTHER FOES,
ATTENTION! ALL PLAYERS!!

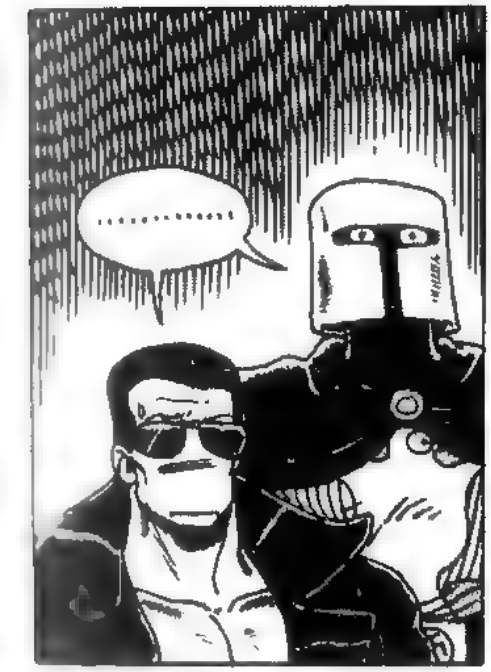
IF YOU SO CALLED HEROES ARE SO DESPERATE THAT YOU HAVE TO INCLUDE A TOY WIND-UP IN YOUR GROUP, THIS'LL BE EASIER THAN I THOUGHT!
HOW LONG DO YOU STAY FRESH IN THAT CAN?


CEASE THIS CHILDISH BICKERING!

BOTH GROUPS WILL RETIRE AND MAKE FINAL PREPARATIONS. IN A FEW MOMENTS, YOU WILL BE TRANSPORTED TO YOUR RESPECTIVE BATTLESITES! THERE WILL BE NO FIGHTING UNTIL I SAY SO!

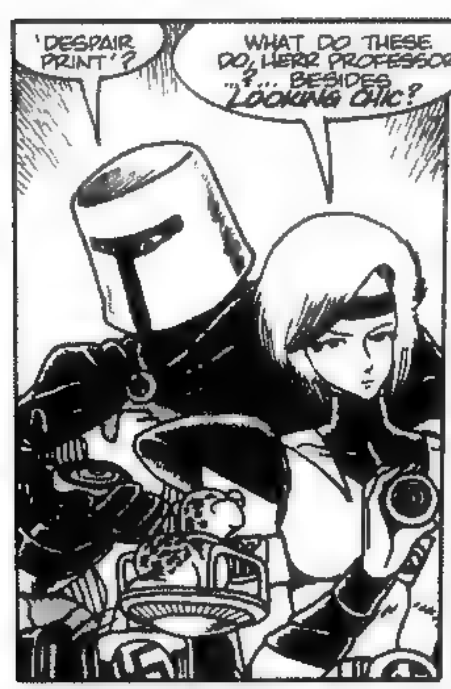

BAH! WE CAME HERE TO FIGHT! IF YOU'RE SCARED TO BE CAUGHT IN IT, STEP BACK AND LET US GET THIS FARCE OVER WITH!
YEAH! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, ANYWAY?

THIS ALWAYS HAPPENS EVERY TIME... IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN...
I AM THE OVERSEER!


.....

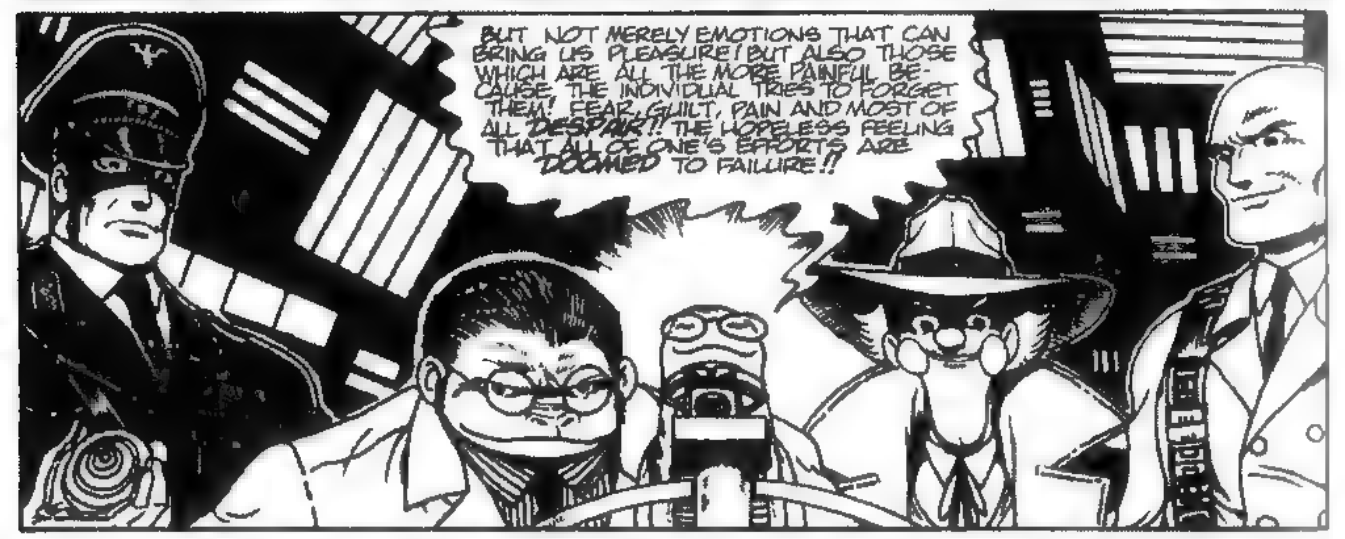
GRUMBLE!?
BAH.
NICE MOVE, KEN.
SHADDUP.
EXIT

THIS IS THE SECRET THAT WILL GIVE US VICTORY! WHEN THE CONTEST BEGINS, NO MATTER WHICH HERO YOU'RE FIGHTING, THIS WILL AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGER THEIR 'DESPAIR-PRINT'!


'DESPAIR PRINT'?
WHAT DO THESE DO, HERR PROFESSOR ...? ... BESIDES LOOKING CHIC?

IN MY STUDIES, I THEORIZED THAT JUST AS EACH INDIVIDUAL HAS THEIR OWN UNIQUE SET OF FINGERPRINTS, RETINAL EYE PATTERN, AND VOICE PITCH... SO I THEORIZED THAT EACH PERSON HAS THEIR OWN UNIQUE PATTERN OF EMOTIONAL PERCEPTIONS...

FOR HUMANS, THERE ARE CERTAIN TIMES WHEN AN EMOTION IS FELT SO 'STRONGLY' THAT EVER AFTERWARDS THE EXPERIENCE IS USED AS THE 'STANDARD' BY WHICH ANY FUTURE EXPERIENCE WITH THAT EMOTION ARE MEASURED...
IT HOLDS TRUE NO MATTER WHAT EMOTION IS CHOSEN. LOVE... ANGER. HOPE... HUMOR.

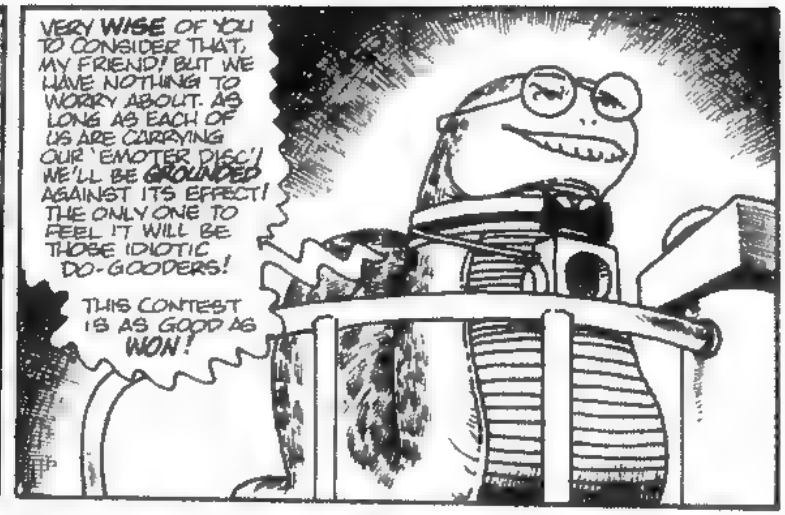

BUT NOT MERELY EMOTIONS THAT CAN BRING US PLEASURE! BUT ALSO THOSE WHICH ARE ALL THE MORE PAINFUL BECAUSE THE INDIVIDUAL TRIES TO FORGET THEM! FEAR, GUILT, PAIN AND MOST OF ALL DESPAIR!! THE HOPELESS FEELING THAT ALL OF ONE'S EFFORTS ARE DOOMED TO FAILURE!!

INCREDIBLE! THESE DEVICES RIVAL THE GENIUS OF EVEN I-REX RUTHLESS!
TOMORROW MAN IS AS GOOD AS DEAD!
HO! HO! HO!
PROFESSOR GLOOM! THEN THESE DISCS...

...ARE TUNED TO AWAKEN THE MOST HOPELESS EMOTIONS OUR ARCH-ENEMIES HAVE EVER FELT, JOKESTER!

THE FEELINGS THAT PERMANENTLY SET THE STANDARD FOR EVERYTHING THEY WOULD CALL DEFEAT!

A BRILLIANT PLAN, HERR PROFESSOR, BUT WHAT ABOUT US? THESE COULD BE A RISK TO US, COULDN'T THEY?
NOT THAT WE HAVE ANY DESPAIR...


VERY WISE OF YOU TO CONSIDER THAT, MY FRIEND! BUT WE HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. AS LONG AS EACH OF US ARE CARRYING OUR 'EMOTER DISC'! WE'LL BE GROUNDED AGAINST ITS EFFECT! THE ONLY ONE TO FEEL IT WILL BE THOSE IDIOTIC DO-GOODERS!
THIS CONTEST IS AS GOOD AS WON!

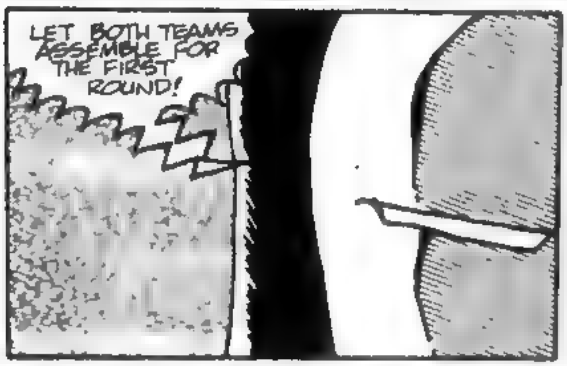
THEN WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR!
THE DO-GOODERS ARE DOOMED
KA-PUT!

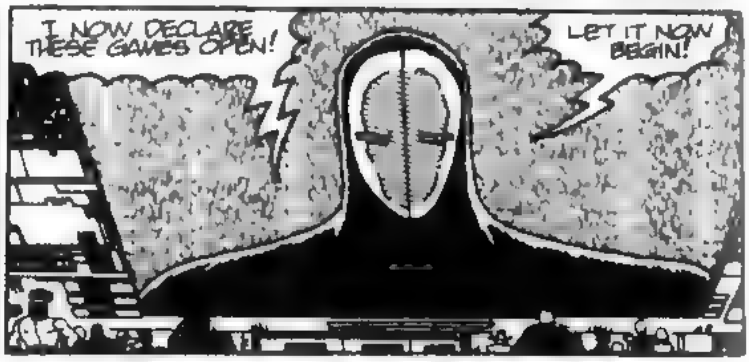
whew! THAT'S REALLY IMPRESSIVE, THE WAY YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT GUYS ON THE OTHER TEAM.
IT HELPS TO KNOW WHAT ALL THE OTHER GUYS MIGHT BE PLANNING.
MERELY DETECTIVE WORK, SON. THE BEST WEAPON IN A FIGHT IS TO KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND THOSE OF YOUR ENEMY!

SOMETHING WRONG, ARNIE?
NAW... I... I... JUST WISH MY BIG BROTHER COULD BE HERE TO SEE ME NOW ...THAT'S ALL.

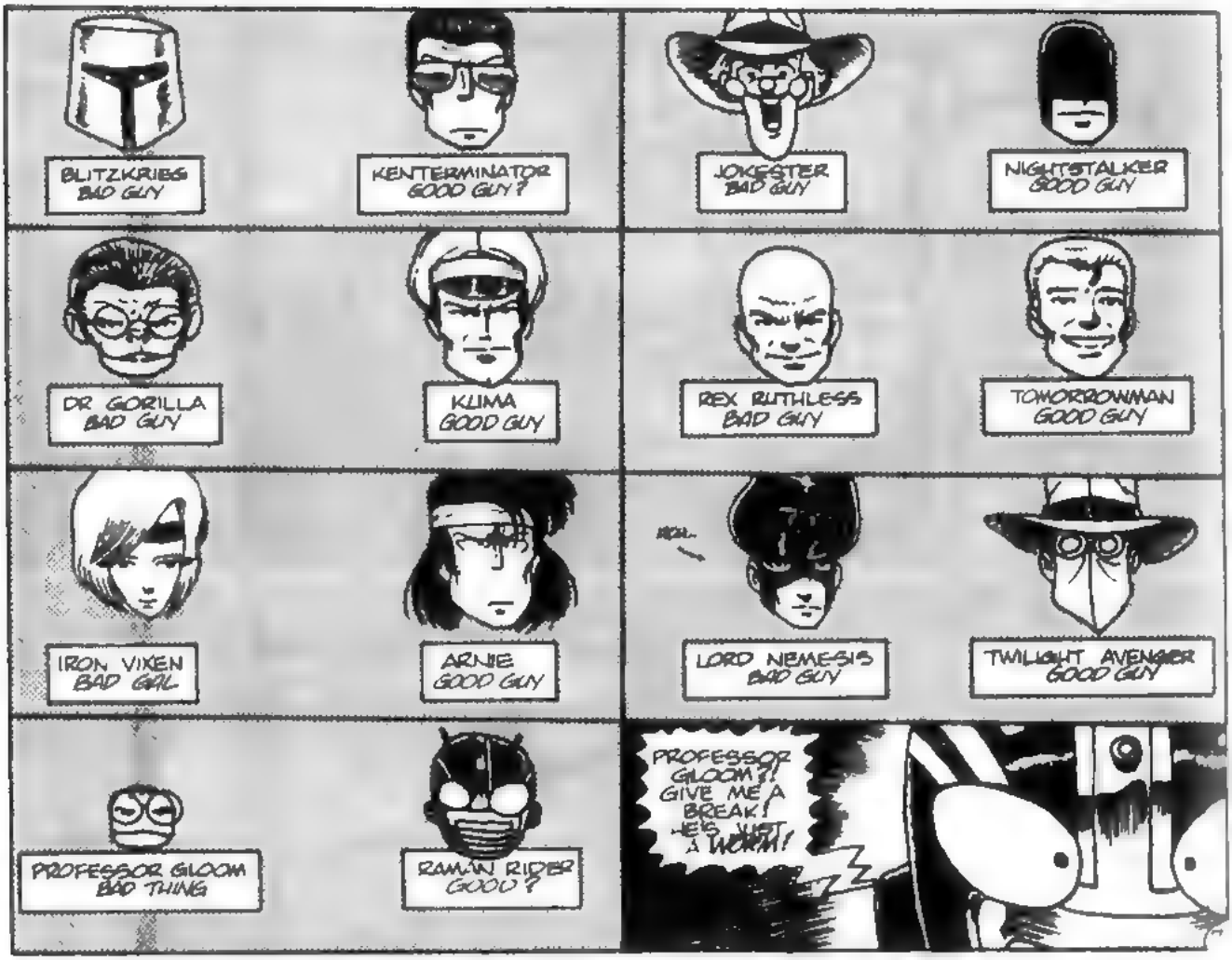
I WOULDN'T WORRY, ARNIE! IF HE WAS HERE, I'M SURE HE'D BE PROUD OF YOU!
THANKS, TOMORROW-MAN.

ATTENTION! BOTH TEAMS PLEASE REPORT TO THE CENTER ARENA!
IT'S TIME.

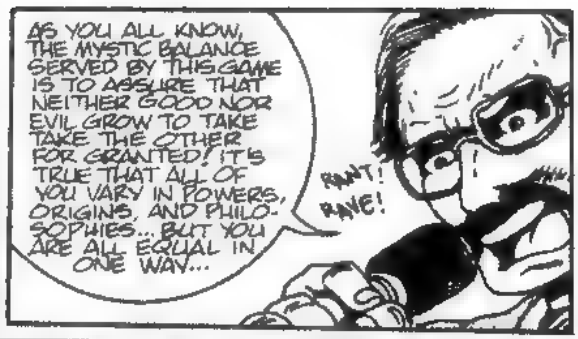

LET BOTH TEAMS ASSEMBLE FOR THE FIRST ROUND!


I NOW DECLARE THESE GAMES OPEN!
LET IT NOW BEGIN!

THAT GUY, OVERSEER, ALWAYS HAS A WAY WITH WORDS. EH, TRUE BELIEVERS? ANYWAY, I'M SAM LIEBER AND I'LL BE YOUR GUIDE THROUGH THIS PULSE POUNDING EXERCISE IN DESTRUCTION TO DETERMINE THE FATE OF THE WORLD!
ACCORDING TO MY EVER FAITHFUL LIST, THIS IS THE LINE UP IN THIS FIRST ROUND...


BLITZKRIEG BAD GUY
KENTERMINATOR GOOD GUY?
JOKESTER BAD GUY
NIGHTSTALKER GOOD GUY
DR. GORILLA BAD GUY
KUMA GOOD GUY
REX RUTHLESS BAD GUY
TOMORROWMAN GOOD GUY
IRON VIXEN BAD GIRL
ARNIE GOOD GUY
LORD NEMESIS BAD GUY
TWILIGHT AVENGER GOOD GUY
PROFESSOR GLOOM BAD THING
RAMAN RIDER GOOD?
PROFESSOR GLOOM?! GIVE ME A BREAK! HE'S JUST A WORM!

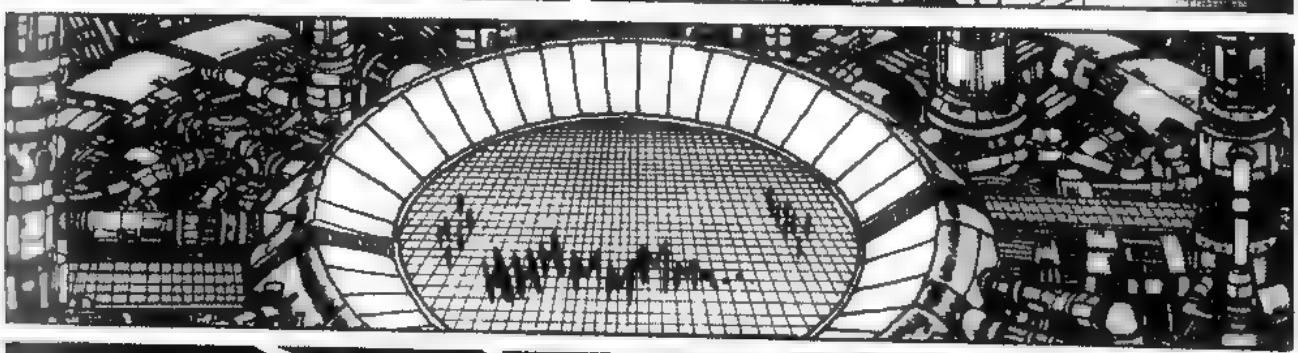
THE FIRST ROUND WILL LAST FOR TWO GRUELING HOURS! AT NOON, THERE WILL BE A ONE HOUR 'HALF-TIME' AND TRUCE FOR ALL MEMBERS TO REST AND REORGANIZE! LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE FOR THOSE WHO DIDN'T BRING A BOX LUNCH! AFTER LUNCH, THE SECOND AND FINAL ROUND WILL TAKE PLACE!

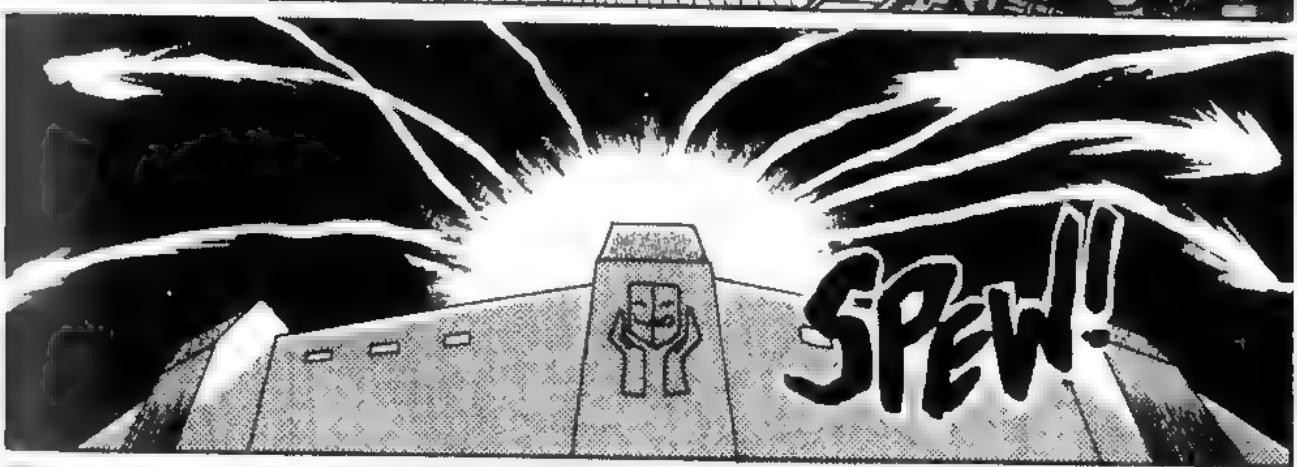

AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE MYSTIC BALANCE SERVED BY THIS GAME IS TO ASSURE THAT NEITHER GOOD NOR EVIL GROW TO TAKE TAKE THE OTHER FOR GRANTED! IT'S TRUE THAT ALL OF YOU VARY IN POWERS, ORIGINS, AND PHILOSOPHIES... BUT YOU ARE ALL EQUAL IN ONE WAY...
RANT! RAVE!

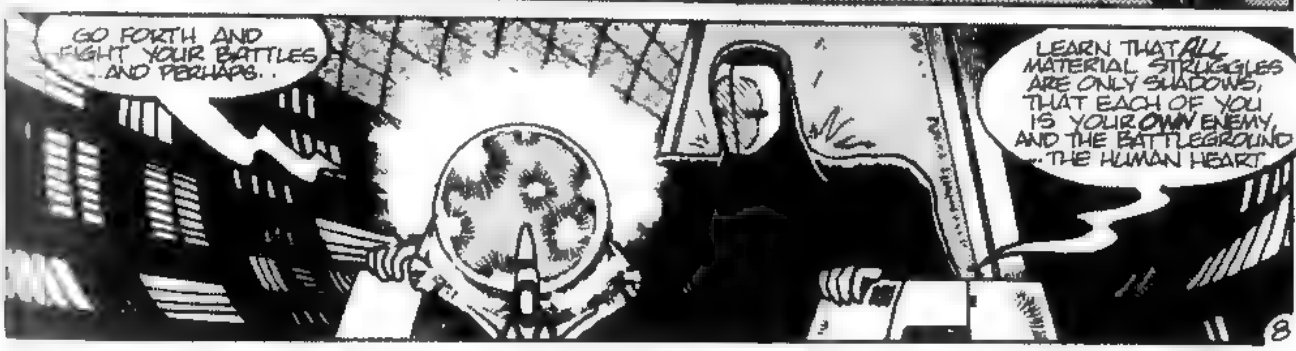
AN UNWAVERING DETERMINATION TO WIN!!
'NUFF SAID!!

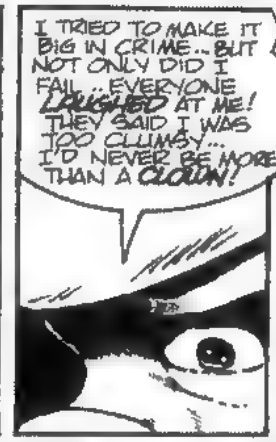
HEY, ARN! DID THE BAD GUYS EVER WIN ONE OF THESE CONTESTS!
A FEW TIMES...

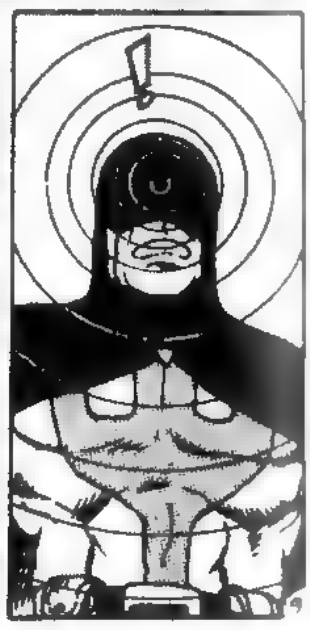
AND NOW, TRUE BELIEVERS! LET THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE BEGIN!




SPEW!


GO FORTH AND FIGHT YOUR BATTLES ...AND PERHAPS...
LEARN THAT ALL MATERIAL STRUGGLES ARE ONLY SHADOWS, THAT EACH OF YOU IS YOUR OWN ENEMY, AND THE BATTLEGROUND ...THE HUMAN HEART.





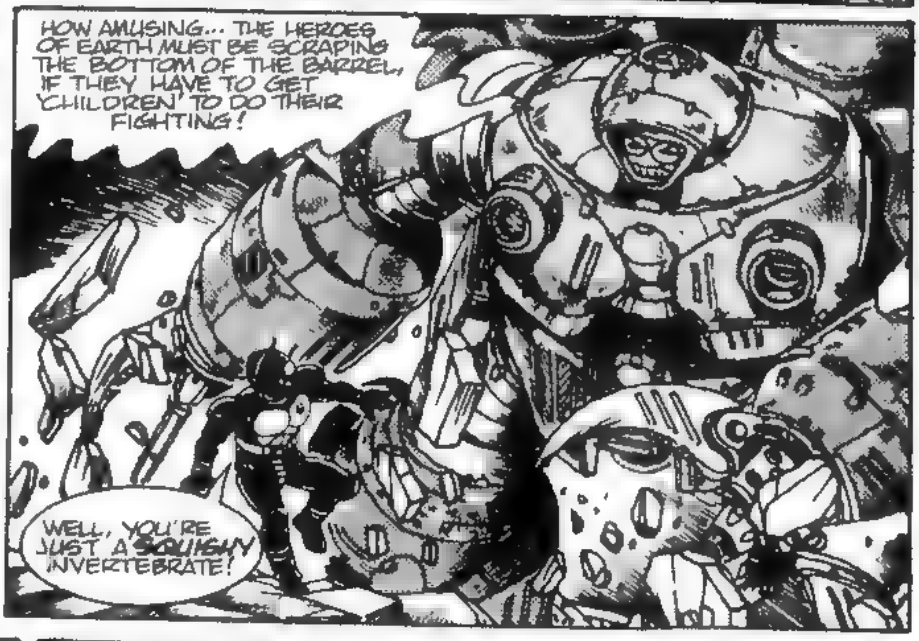
* A CIRCUS CLOWN

MOM! DAD! LOOK OUT...

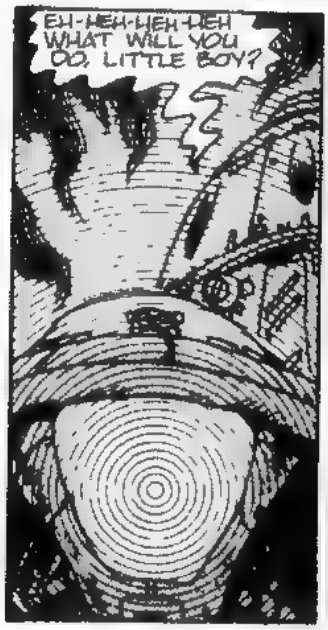
NNNNOOOOOOOO!

HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO! HO!
NNNNOOOO...

...AND AWAY WE GO!


HOW AMUSING... THE HEROES OF EARTH MUST BE SCRAPING THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL, IF THEY HAVE TO GET 'CHILDREN' TO DO THEIR FIGHTING!
WELL, YOU'RE JUST A SQUISHY INVERTEBRATE!

AH? WELL, THEY PROBABLY THOUGHT THEY WOULDN'T NEED MUCH MUSCLE FOR ANYONE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU! I WON'T EVEN NEED TO USE MY 'SPECIAL' TRAINING! COME ALONG QUIETLY OR I MIGHT HAVE TO MUSS YOU UP!

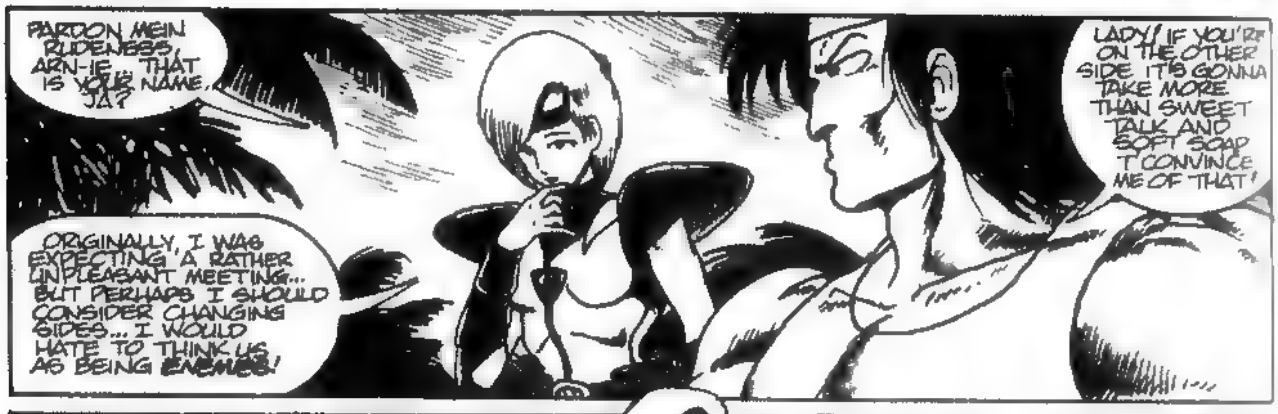

EH-HEH-HEH-HEH WHAT WILL YOU DO, LITTLE BOY?

LITTLE BOY!!
LITTLE BOY!

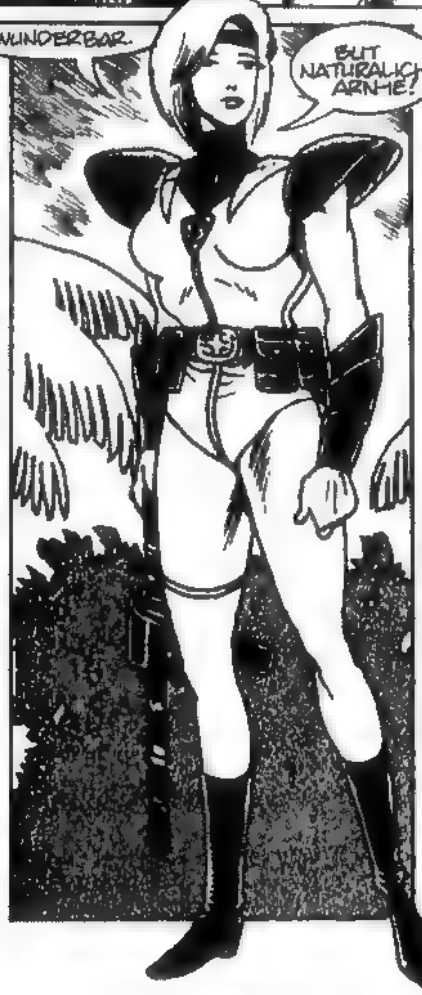
LITTLE BOY!
LITTLE BOY
LITTLE BOY!

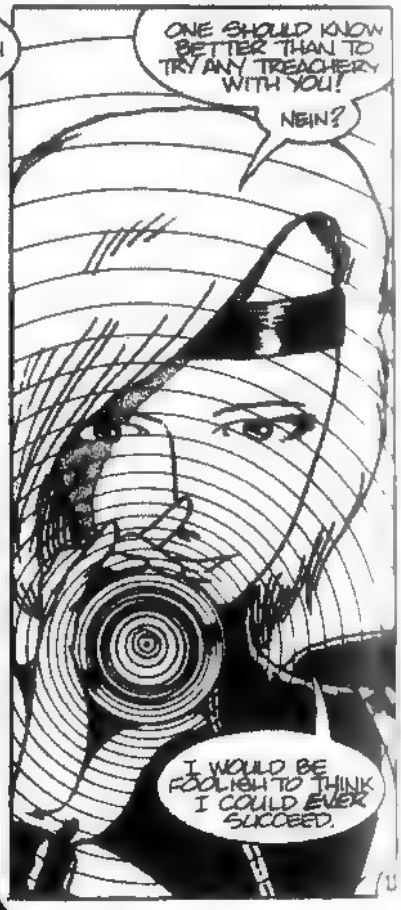
NICE SPECIAL FX...

GUTEN TAG! ARNIE LIEBCHEN. (Tee hee)
?


PARDON MEIN RUDENESS, ARN-IE... THAT IS YOUR NAME, JA?
ORIGINALLY, I WAS EXPECTING A RATHER UNPLEASANT MEETING... BUT PERHAPS I SHOULD CONSIDER CHANGING SIDES... I WOULD HATE TO THINK US AS BEING ENEMIES!
LADY! IF YOU'RE ON THE OTHER SIDE IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN SWEET TALK AND SOFT SOAP T CONVINCE ME OF THAT!

I DON'T CARE MUCH FOR FIGHTIN' GIRLS, BUT IF YOU'D LIKE FOR BOTH OF US TO AVOID ANY DIFFICULTIES ... FOR A START, I'D SUGGEST UNBUCKING AND DROPPING YOUR WEAPONS BELT..
AFTER THAT, IF YOU'D CARE TO SURRENDER? WELL, MAYBE YOU'D RATE SOME POINTS ON THE WINNIN' SIDE!


WUNDERBAR.
BUT NATURALICH ARNIE!


ONE SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO TRY ANY TREACHERY WITH YOU!
NEIN?
I WOULD BE FOOLISH TO THINK I COULD EVER SUCCEED.

YOU WOULDN'T HURT A POOR HELPLESS GIRL? I'M ONLY DOING WHAT I THINK IS RIGHT... IT'S NOT MY FAULT.

MY FAULT

MY FAULT

MY FAULT

MY FAULT

my fault

MY FAULT

ARNIE... PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY WITH ME! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU BUT IT'S AN IMPORTANT MISSION ... I FEEL THAT IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO!

GRUMPYE

I DON'T WANT YOU TO BLAME ME FOR THAT... UNDERNEATH ALL THAT BLUSTER AND MUSCLE... YOU'RE REALLY A DEAR, YOU KNOW THAT?

I DON'T WANT YOU TO BLAME ME FOR JUST WANTING TO MAKE YOU PROUD OF ME... I... I... REALLY LIKE YOU.. YOU KNOW?

LOOK! ONCE I GRADUATE, FINE! THEN WE CAN BOTH SERVE ON BOARD THE SDF-1! BUT DURING THE SHAKEDOWN CRUISE, THEY'RE PLANNING ON TESTING THE 'STAR-JUMP' DRIVE. I THINK IT MAY BE DANGER-OUS, JULIE!

I MET THIS SCIENTIST ON THE PROJECT WHO SAYS IF THEY TRY TO USE THE SOLARBEAM POWER MATRIX, THERE MIGHT NOT BE ENOUGH POWER FOR A SEC-OND RETURN JUMP!

BUT PROFES-SOR HOSSEN-PEFFER SAYS THAT...

BAH!

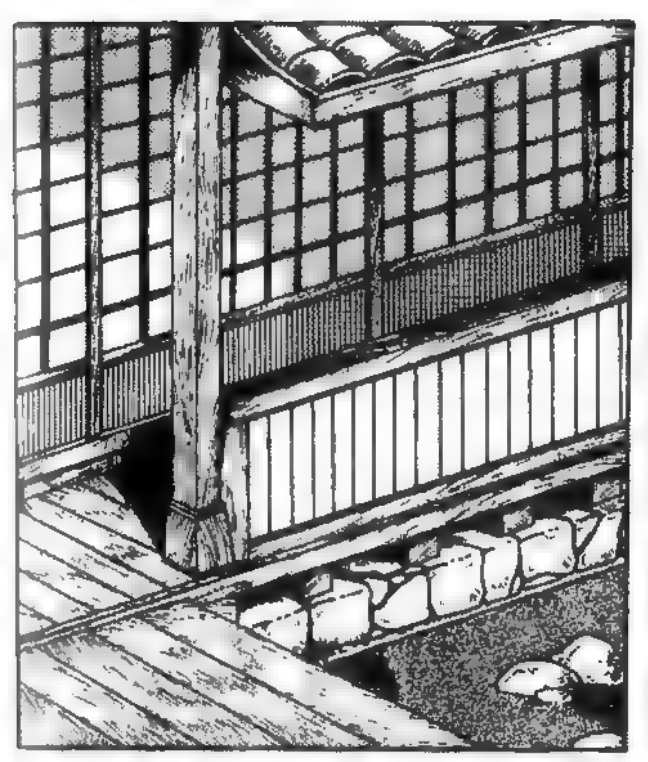
THE SPACE BAT-TLE FORTRESS IS INDEED FORMIDA-BLE, BUT THE EARTH DEFENSE LEAGUE MADE A SERIOUS MISTAKE WHEN THEY LET THAT PEA-BRAIN HOS-SENPEFFER TALK THEM INTO BACK-ING HIS IDIOTIC FANTASIES OF USING SUNBEA-MS FOR THE MAIN DRIVE!

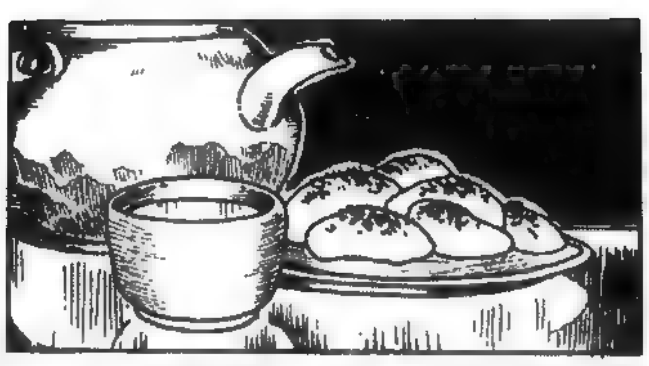
IF THEY INITIATE A STAR JUMP, THEY WILL SPEND THE NEXT TEN YEARS TRYING TO GET HOME UNDER AUXILARY POWER!

TAKE MY ADVICE! WAIT UNTIL I CAN IN-STALL A STEAM REACTOR AS A BACK-UP POWER SOURCE!

PROFESSOR STEAM-HEAD IS A TOP SCIENTIST HERE! PLEASE JULIE, LISTEN TO HIM... AND ME...

ARNIE... I KNOW YOU ONLY WANT THE BEST FOR US, BUT I FEEL IT'S MY DUTY! I HAVE THE TRAINING!
ARNIE...?
WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
SHE'LL SEE REASON... WHEN I GRADUATE, WE'LL BOTH WRANGLE AN ASSIGNMENT SO THAT WE'LL BE TOGETHER!
NO!!
"MY DEAREST ARNIE, PLEASE DON'T BE UNHAPPY. I CARE FOR YOU VERY MUCH, BUT I CANNOT ABANDON MY DUTY OR MY FRIENDS. I PROMISE, I WILL RETURN. REMEMBER OUR LOVE. -JULIE"
"WE'VE LOST THE SAF-1. STEAMHEAD WAS RIGHT."
JULIE...
DON'T LEAVE ME!
SOB!
BLUBBER!
THERE... THERE... IT'S ALL RIGHT, LIEBCHEN.

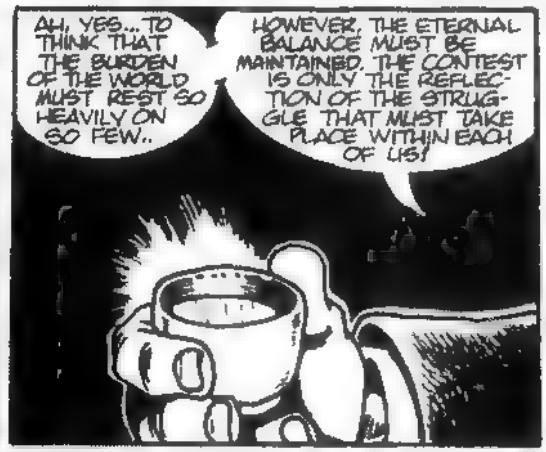


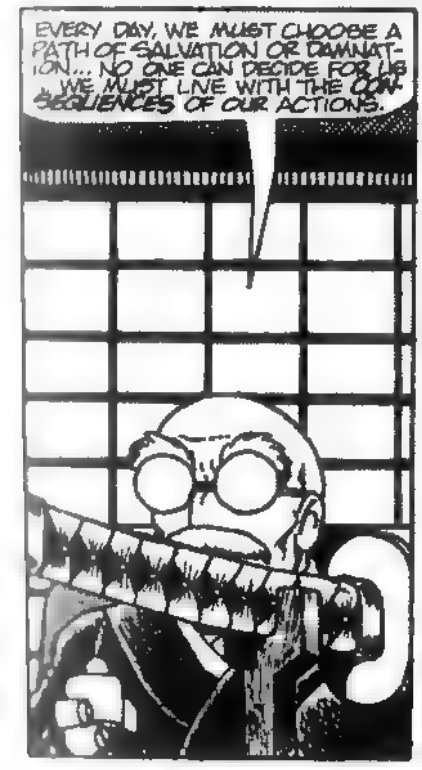


I AM HONORED THAT YOU WERE ABLE TO STOP FOR A VISIT, MS. CELANDE! FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

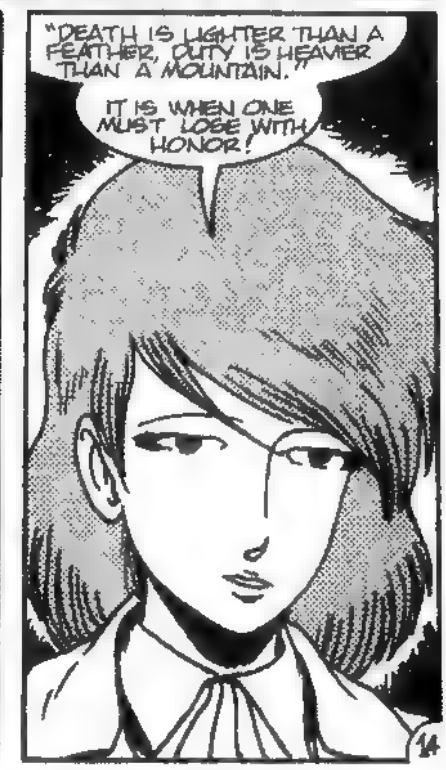
THANK YOU FOR ACCEPTING ME.

HOWEVER... THIS IS NOT A SOCIAL VISIT, IS IT?
I'M AFRAID NOT...
LIKE YOU, I AM CONCERNED WITH THE GREAT CONTEST THAT EVEN NOW IS TAKING PLACE...


AH, YES... TO THINK THAT THE BURDEN OF THE WORLD MUST REST SO HEAVILY ON SO FEW..
HOWEVER, THE ETERNAL BALANCE MUST BE MAINTAINED. THE CONTEST IS ONLY THE REFLECTION OF THE STRUGGLE THAT MUST TAKE PLACE WITHIN EACH OF US!

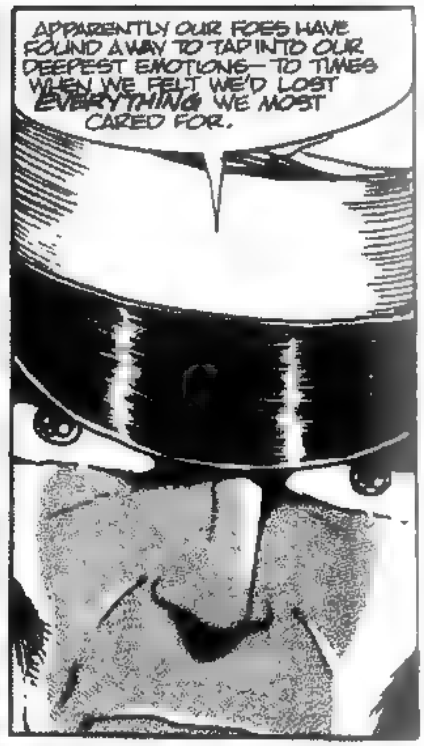

EVERY DAY, WE MUST CHOOSE A PATH OF SALVATION OR DAMNATION... NO ONE CAN DECIDE FOR US. WE MUST LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS.

INDEED. HOWEVER, THOSE WE CARE FOR MUST STRUGGLE NOT ONLY FOR OUR WORLD OF THE PRESENT, BUT FOR THE PAST AND FUTURE! IS THAT NOT SO KUDUSAI-SAN?
IT IS...
I ASK YOU MITA... WHEN IS IT BETTER TO LOSE THAN WIN?


"DEATH IS LIGHTER THAN A FEATHER, DUTY IS HEAVIER THAN A MOUNTAIN."
IT IS WHEN ONE MUST LOSE WITH HONOR!

*FEMALE NINJA

WHAT A BATTLE...
IT WASN'T A BATTLE! IT WAS A DISASTER!
grgm...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.. I'VE BEEN IN TOUGH FIGHTS BEFORE.. BUT I DIDN'T EVEN GET STARTED! EVERYTHING SEEMED HOPELESS!
STRANGE! I TOO HAD THAT SAME FEELING OF DESPAIR.
WHAT HAPPENED IN YOUR MATCH?
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY. IT STARTED AFTER I WAS TELEPORTED...
"THE OPPONENT I WAS ASSIGNED, IS AN OLD ADVERSARY OF MINE: REX RUTHLESS! A BRILLIANT SCIENTIST AND A RATHER POOR SPORT. I FOUGHT HIM MANY TIMES BEFORE AND BEAT HIM. I EXPECTED THE OUTCOME TO BE THE SAME...
TOMORROW MAN HATE CLUB
"OH, I EXPECTED A FIGHT... BUT THIS TIME, IT WAS DIFFERENT...
WE MEET AGAIN, OLD FRIEND!
AND HOPEFULLY THIS TIME YOU'LL SEE THE ERROR OF YOUR PAST MISTAKES..
WHAT'LL IT BE THIS TIME, REX? ATOMIC-TARGET PISTOLS, BIONIC ENERGY-QUOITS, LASER DISCUS, CRYOGENIC GRENADE PITCHING MACHINES?
OH, NO NEED TO STOOP TO SUCH ROUGH AND TUMBLE CONTESTS... IT MIGHT GET US A PENALTY FLAG!
NO, I JUST THOUGHT WE MIGHT TALK ABOUT OLD TIMES.
I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE PICTURES TAKEN BY MY SPACE WARP CAMERA OF YOUR OLD HOME PLANET OF NEPTON!
NEPTON?
WAW!!
MOMMY!! DADDY!!
BAAWW!!!
LOOK OUT!!
TIDAL WAVE!



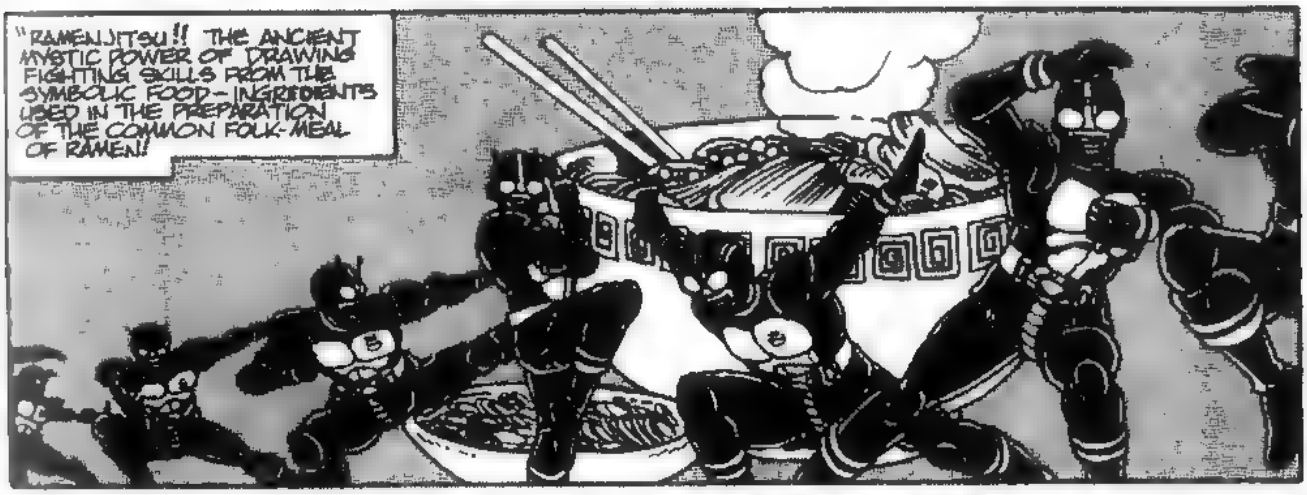
* SEE NINJA HIGH SCHOOL NO. 2.

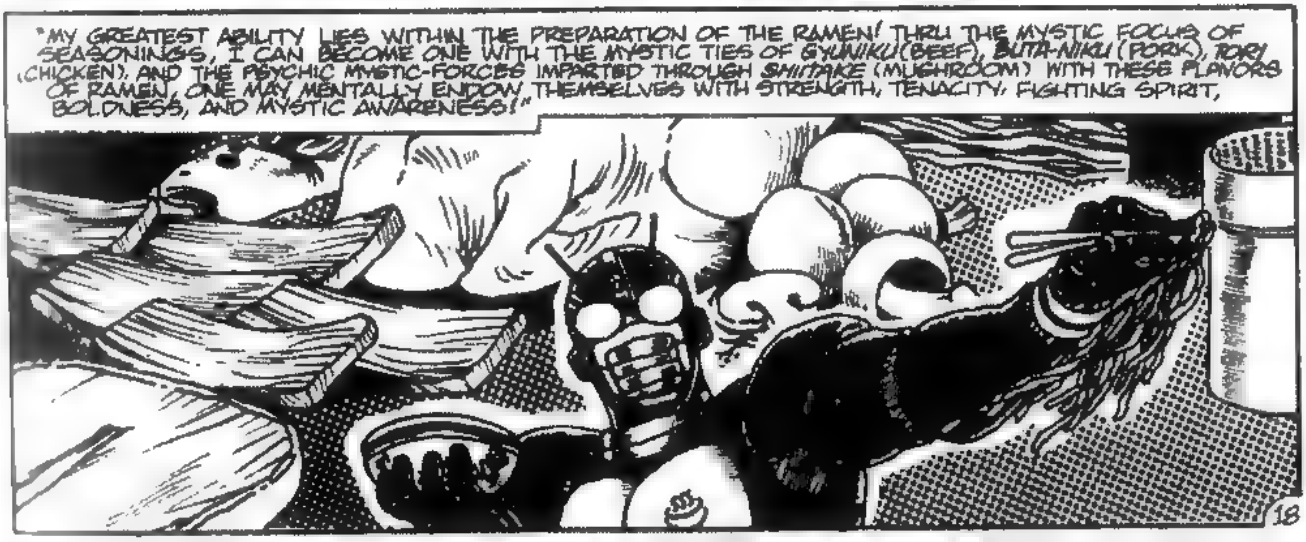
STILL, JUST KNOWING WHAT THEIR TRICK IS, ISN'T ENOUGH... IF WE CAN'T FIND SOMEWAY TO AT LEAST PARTLY SHIELD OURSELVES FROM IT, THEY STILL MIGHT WIN.
AGREED.
YEAH! WHY I DIDN'T EVEN GET A CHANCE TO USE...

WAIT A MINUTE!
THAT'S IT! I JUST MAY HAVE THE SOLUTION!
SURE!

WHAT'VE YOU GOT KID? MIRACLES?
PERHAPS... AHA!

I AM RAMEN RIDER!! LAST STUDENT OF THE ANCIENT FIGHTING ART OF RAMENJITSU!!

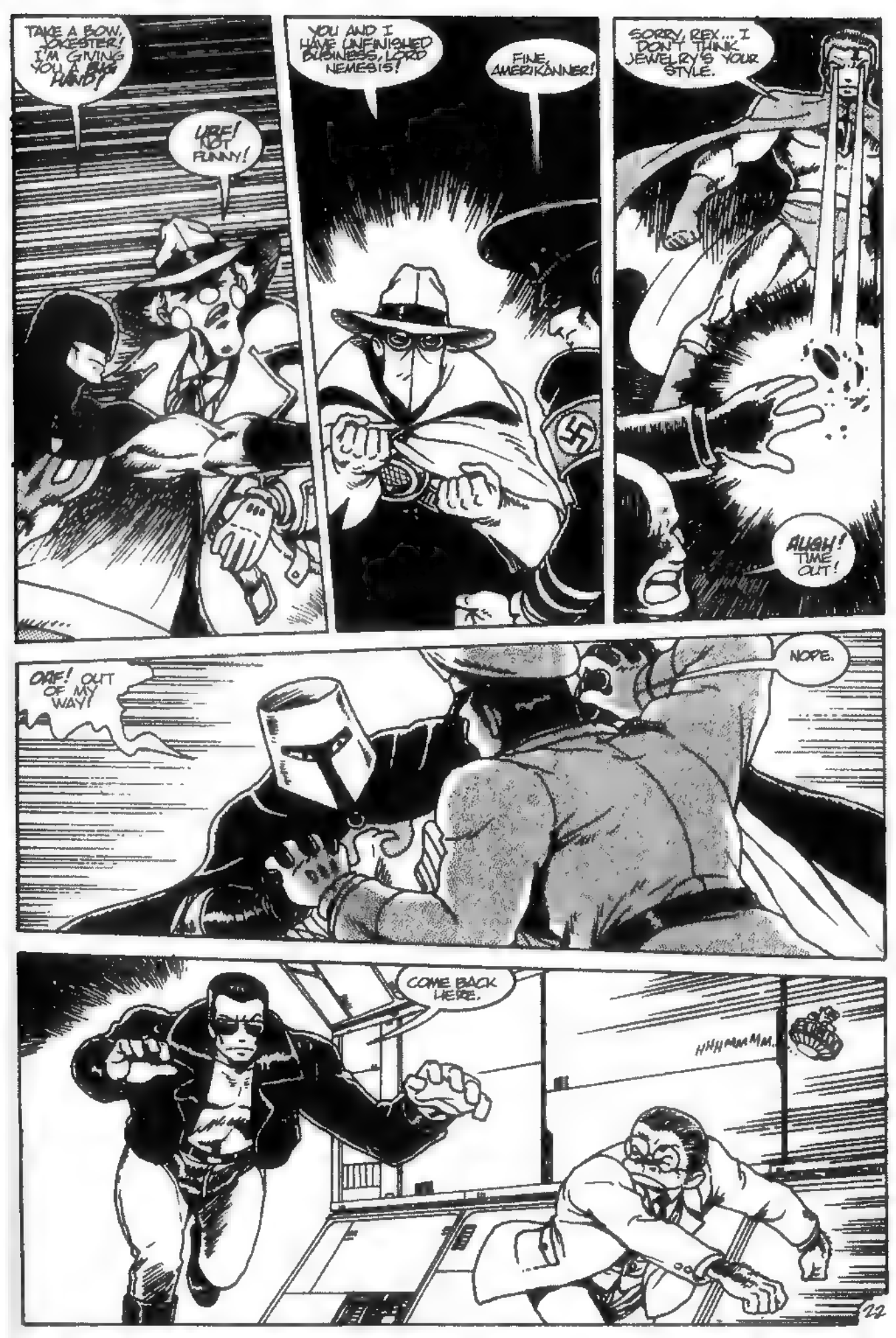

"RAMENJITSU!! THE ANCIENT MYSTIC POWER OF DRAWING FIGHTING SKILLS FROM THE SYMBOLIC FOOD-INGREDIENTS USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE COMMON FOLK-MEAL OF RAMEN!


"MY GREATEST ABILITY LIES WITHIN THE PREPARATION OF THE RAMEN! THRU THE MYSTIC FOCUS OF SEASONINGS, I CAN BECOME ONE WITH THE MYSTIC TIES OF GYUNIKU (BEEF), BUTA-NIKU (PORK), TORI (CHICKEN), AND THE PSYCHIC MYSTIC-FORCES IMPARTED THROUGH SHITAKE (MUSHROOM) WITH THESE FLAVORS OF RAMEN, ONE MAY MENTALLY ENDOW THEMSELVES WITH STRENGTH, TENACITY, FIGHTING SPIRIT, BOLDNESS, AND MYSTIC AWARENESS!"

MY CONGRATULATIONS, HERR GLOOM! YOUR EMOTO-DISCS WERE EVERYTHING YOU SAID THEY'D BE!
I WONDER WHAT OUR OPPOSITE NUMBERS ARE DOING RIGHT NOW?
HO! HO! PROBABLY CRYING IN THEIR SOUP!
THAT AMERIKANNER, THE TWILIGHT AVENGER, KEPT TRYING BUT HIS HEART WASN'T IN IT! ACH! HE WAS SWINGING LIKE A BARN DOOR!
POOR ARNIE... I REALLY HOPE HE MANAGES TO SURVIVE THIS...
PERHAPS WITH SOME PROPER EDUCATION..
NOW THAT THEY'RE REALLY DOWN... I SUGGEST WE MAKE OUR NEXT ATTACK A 'COMBINED' ASSAULT!
BRILLIANT, DR. GORILLA!
WE AREN'T ALLOWED TO 'GANG-UP' ON ANY ONE OF OUR FOES BUT IF... IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE... A FEW OF OUR ATTACKS "ACCIDENTALLY" MISSED... AND HIT ANOTHER OF THEM ALL AT ONCE.
NOW, MY DEAR, IRON VIXEN, I DEVELOPED A DEVICE TO ASSURE US CERTAIN VICTORY!
IT WILL ALLOW YOU TO AMPLIFY YOUR HYPNOTIC ABILITIES SO THAT THEY APPEAR REAL TO THOSE HEROES! I'M SURE YOU CAN USE YOUR IMAGINATION!
IF IN SOME UNLIKELY EVENT OUR FOES SHOULD MANAGE TO GAIN THE ADVANTAGE, WE HAVE ONE OPTION THAT THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO OPPOSE!
ALL OF US WHO ARE STILL ABLE TO WILL BREAK OFF THE FIGHT... AND TOGETHER USE THE E-DISCS ON THE OVERSEER.
FORCING HIM TO DECLARE US THE WINNER!!
ATTENTION! THE SECOND ROUND WILL NOW BEGIN!
AH... BUT IT'S AS GOOD AS WON ANYWAYS...

Silence
SINCE THE TEAM REPRESENTING 'UN-GOOD' WON THE FIRST ROUND... THEY MAY OPT FOR RENEWED SINGLE COMBAT OR GROUP MELEE!
GROUP COMBAT! WE WANT TO GET TO FINISH THIS!
VERY WELL!
LET THE BATTLE BE JOINED!
ARNIE... IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL...
LOOK! SHE'S CREATED A MONSTER!
IT'S HIM! THE THING THAT TOOK MY BROTHER AWAY!
STAND BACK EVERYONE, THIS IS MY FIGHT!

NO, ARNIE! WE HAVE MORE TO FIGHT FOR THAN PERSONAL GRUDGE MATCHES!
OUR DISPUTE IS WITH HIS MASTERS! ALLOW ME!
WHA'?! THEY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THAT, SHOULD THEY?
SOME-THING'S GONE WRONG! USE THE DEVICE AGAIN! CREATE BIGGER MONSTERS! AN ARMY OF MONSTERS!!
JA, HERR PROFESSOR!
RAMAN RIDER STICK!
HA!!
TOSS!!
GOTT HIMMEL!

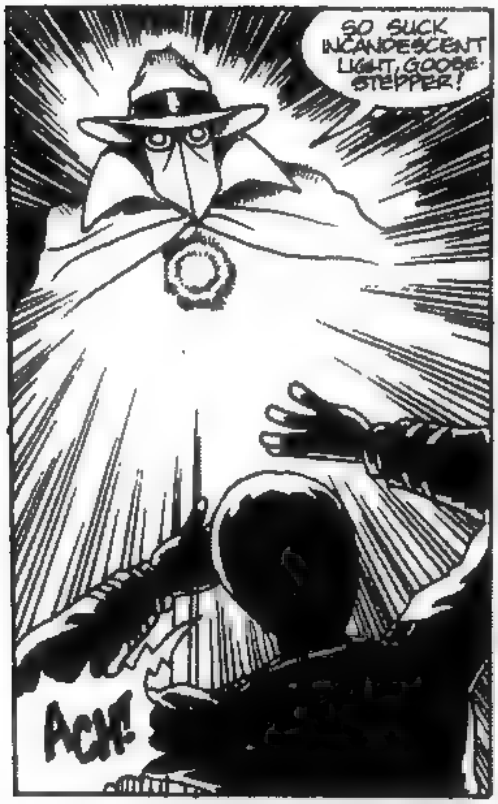

TAKE A BOW, JOKESTER! I'M GIVING YOU A BIG HAND!
URF! NOT FUNNY!
YOU AND I HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS, LORD NEMESIS!
FINE, AMERIKANNER!
SORRY, REX... I DON'T THINK JEWELRY'S YOUR STYLE.
AUGH! TIME OUT!
ORF! OUT OF MY WAY!
NOPE.
COME BACK HERE.
HHHMMMM.

AAAPGHHH!

YOUR KIND WILL ALWAYS BE DEFEATED, BECAUSE IT IS ALWAYS THE STRONG THAT SURVIVE..
YEAH, SURE, BIRD BRAIN.

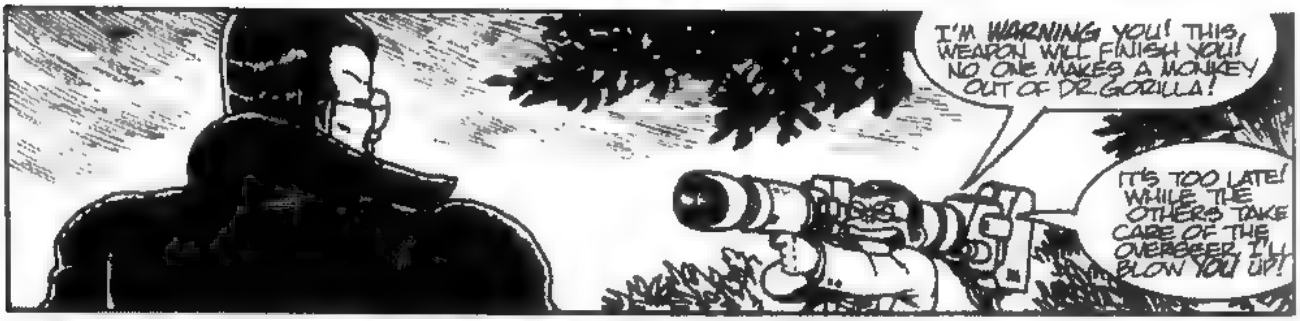
WELL, WE MAY NOT BE PERFECT, BUT WHO IS? JUST BECAUSE WE DON'T BELIEVE IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OTHERS DOESN'T MAKE US WEAK.

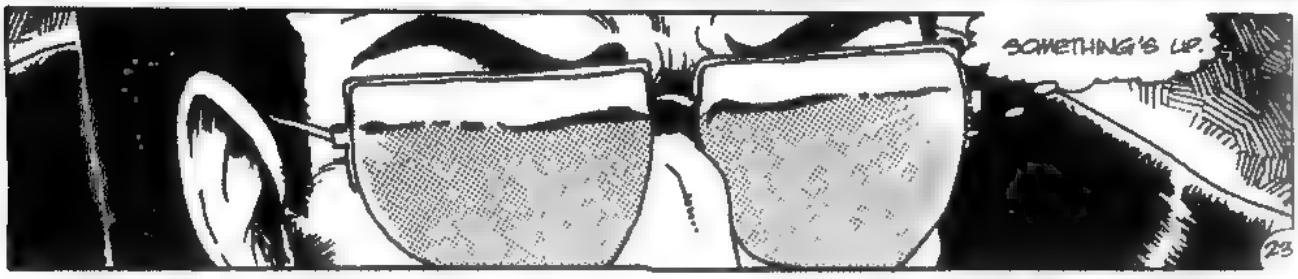
IN FACT, BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN EACH OTHER OUR STRENGTH CAN NEVER BE DEFEATED!!


SO SUCK INCANDESCENT LIGHT, GOOSE-STEPPER!
ACH!

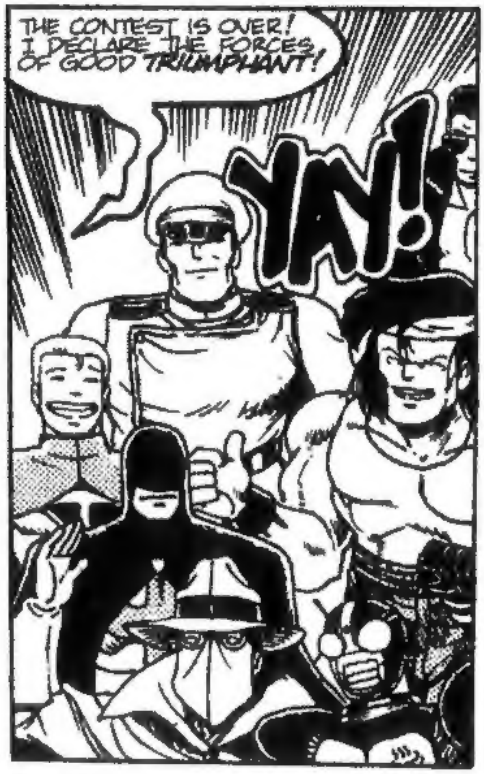
HMMMMM.. DR. GORILLA CANNOT HAVE GONE FAR...

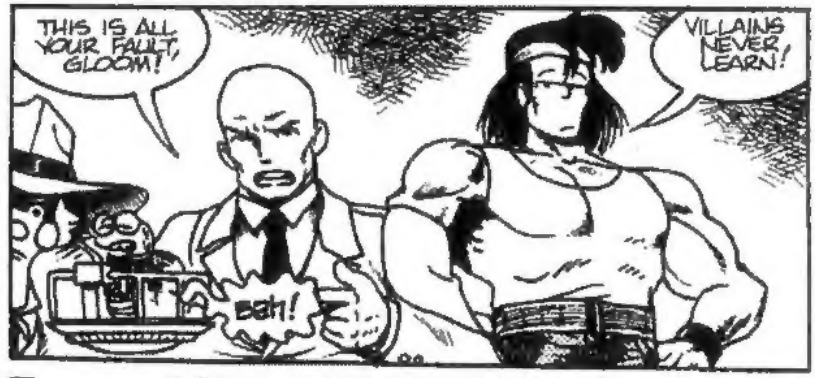
WHOOM!
FOUND HIM.

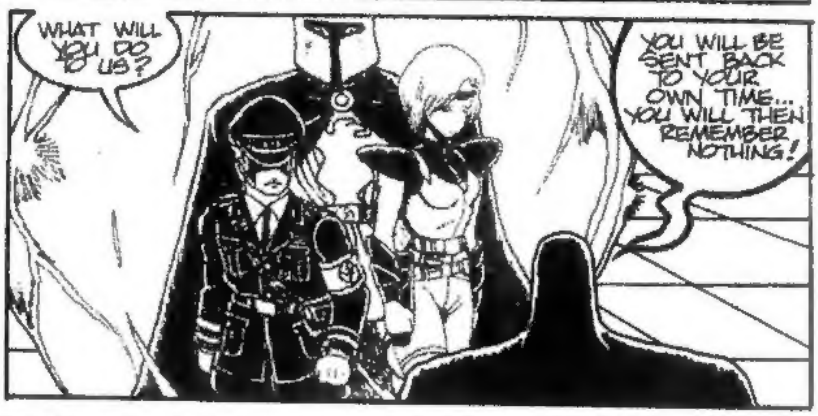

I'M WARNING YOU! THIS WEAPON WILL FINISH YOU! NO ONE MAKES A MONKEY OUT OF DR. GORILLA!
IT'S TOO LATE! WHILE THE OTHERS TAKE CARE OF THE OVERBEER, I'LL BLOW YOU UP!

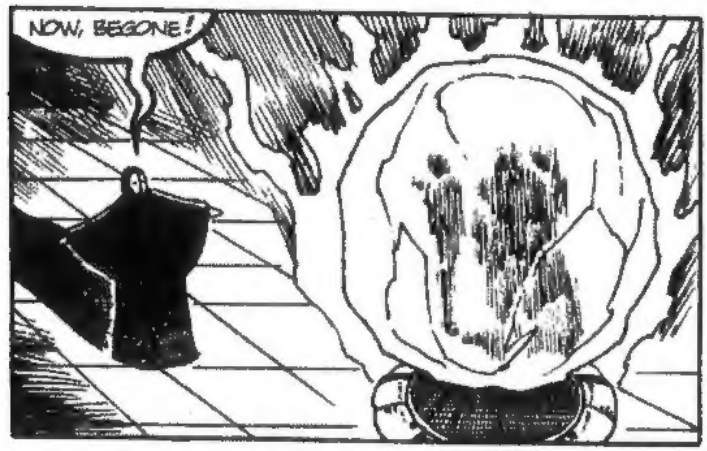

SOMETHING'S UP.

ANY LAST WORDS, CYBORG?
HMMMM...
YOU TALK TOO MUCH, FUZZY FACE!
BETTER GO WARN THE OTHERS!
RUN... RUN...
HEY, EVERYBODY!! THE VILLAINS ARE TRYING TO HIJACK THE CONTEST!!!
THANK YOU, KENTERMINATOR, BUT NO NEED TO WORRY!
MS. CELONDE, OVERSEER!
YOU WERE ABLE TO RESCUE THE OVERSEER?
WHEN WE FOUND OUT WHAT THE BAD GUYS HAD PLANNED, WE STARTED TO, BUT HE HAD 'EM FROZEN STIFF BEFORE WE COULD DO ANYTHING!
THEIR EMOTION DISCS COULDN'T AFFECT HIM.


THE CONTEST IS OVER! I DECLARE THE FORCES OF GOOD TRIUMPHANT!
YAY!


THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT, GLOOM!
VILLAINS NEVER LEARN!
BEH!


WHAT WILL YOU DO TO US?
YOU WILL BE SENT BACK TO YOUR OWN TIME... YOU WILL THEN REMEMBER NOTHING!


NOW, BEGONE!

WELL, MS. CELANDE, IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE.
REALLY?

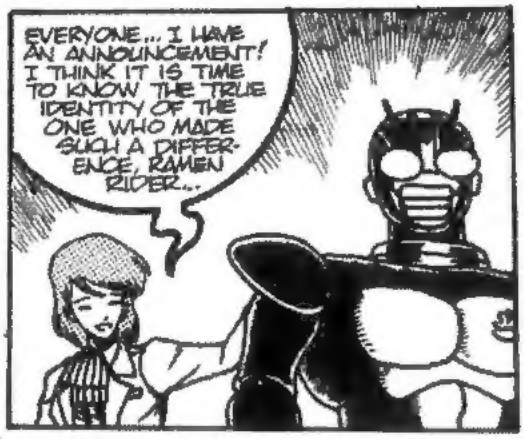
WELL, TO TELL THE TRUTH... I WOULD LIKE TO GO HOME. AS MUCH AS I LIKE THIS ERA, I PREFER MY OWN.
QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL ONCE AGAIN BE IN THIS CONTEST!
OH, NO... IT'S TOO HECTIC FOR ME!

OH, BY THE WAY... LORD NEMESIS DROPPED THESE PAPERS AS I WAS FIGHTING HIM...
LET ME SEE...

GOOD HEAVENS! THESE ARE PLANS FOR MODERN WEAPONS! BY BEING HERE, THE TWILIGHT AVENGER MAY HAVE PREVENTED THE NAZIS FROM WINNING WORLD WAR TWO!

ANYTHING IMPORTANT?
OH, YES.

YOU HAVE DONE A GREAT SERVICE TO YOUR ERA...


EVERYONE... I HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT! I THINK IT IS TIME TO KNOW THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE ONE WHO MADE SUCH A DIFFERENCE, RAMEN RIDER...

GASP!!
I KNEW IT ALL ALONG.

SAMMI!!
HELLO EVERYONE.

YEARS AGO... HER UNCLE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE OFFICIAL COOK FOR THE CONTESTS, BUT DUE TO A LAST MINUTE ENTRY, ANOTHER APPLICANT WON THE POSITION...

IT WAS HIS WISH THAT SOME DAY I ENTER, NOT ONLY AS A COOK, BUT AS A CONTESTANT! TO RESTORE FAMILY HONOR!

YOU HAVE WON MUCH MORE THAN PERSONAL HONOR HERE, SAMMI...

YOU HAVE ALL STRUGGLED... AS GOOD PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS STRUGGLED TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE EARTH, FOR THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE!

I HEREBY DECLARE THESE GAMES OFFICIALLY OVER!
END

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